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## ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

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### Zásady pro vypracování

Cílem bakalářské práce je prostudovat výskyt a užití interogativních struktur v diskurzu sociálních sítí. Studentka nejprve představí elektronický diskurz a uvede jeho distinktivní jazykové prostředky, se zaměřením na prototypické rysy mluveného jazyka a jeho vliv na komunikaci v tomto diskurzu. Dále na základě studia relevantní odborné literatury vymezí interogativní strukturu z hlediska syntaktického, představí typologii tázacích vět a podrobně popíše jejich komunikativní funkce. Následně provede analýzu korpusu vybraných autentických interakcí z prostředí sociálních sítí s cílem zmapovat užití, formu a komunikativní funkce interogativních struktur v závislosti na kontextu, ve kterém se vyskytují. Závěrem zhodnotí převažující tendence s ohledem na zkoumaný diskurz, jeho specifické rysy a funkce.

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## **ANNOTATION**

This bachelor thesis examines the occurrence and use of interrogative structures in social media discourse. The theoretical part focuses on electronic discourse with its distinctive language properties, prototypical features of spoken language and its influence on communication in this discourse. Furthermore, it defines the interrogative structure from the syntactic point of view, introduces the typology of interrogative sentences and describes their communicative functions. The analytical part subsequently studies the corpus of selected authentic interactions from the environment of social networks in order to map the use, form and communicative functions of interrogative structures on the context in which they occur.

## **KEYWORDS**

interrogative structure, interrogative clause, social media discourse, communicative functions of interrogative structure, the influence of spoken language

## **ANOTACE**

Tato bakalářská práce zkoumá výskyt a využití tázacích struktur v diskurzu sociálních medií. Teoretická část je zaměřena na elektronický diskurz s jeho distinktivními jazykovými prostředky, prototypické rysy mluveného jazyka a jeho vliv na komunikaci v tomto diskurzu. Dále definuje tázací strukturu ze syntaktického hlediska, představí typologii tázacích vět a popíše jejich komunikativní funkce. Část analytická následně studuje korpus vybraných autentických interakcí z prostředí sociálních sítí s cílem zmapovat užití, formu a komunikativní funkce tázacích struktur v závislosti na kontextu, ve kterém se vyskytují.

## **KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA**

tázací struktura, tázací věta, diskurz sociálních medií, komunikativní funkce tázací struktury, vliv mluveného jazyka

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## INTRODUCTION

The present paper deals with interrogative structures that appear in social media discourse. The objective is to map the occurrence and use of interrogative structures in social media discourse as well as examining the form and communicative functions of interrogative structures in the context in which they occur. The thesis also intends to investigate and evaluate the prevailing tendencies with respect to the researched discourse, its specific features and functions.

The structure of this paper is divided into a theoretical part and an analytical part. The theoretical part comprises the first three chapters, which establish the stylistic and syntactic background for the analysis. In the first chapter, the terms “electronic discourse” and “computer-mediated communication” and their relation to social media discourse are introduced. Consequently, social media discourse is further analysed with a focus on distinctive language properties, prototypical features of spoken language and its influence on communication in the researched discourse. The subsequent chapter is concerned with the definition of the interrogative structure from the syntactic point of view, the typology of interrogative sentences and a description of their communicative functions.

The analytical part subsequently analyses the corpus of selected authentic interactions from the environment of social networks in order to map the use, form and communicative functions of interrogative structures on the context in which they occur. Firstly, the aim and purpose of the research are set out. Secondly, the social networks Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are introduced as the main sources from which the corpus is compiled. The method of research is a corpus study that consists of 200 assembled instances of interrogative structures used in interactions on social media. Thirdly, corpus data are analysed based on the form and function of an interrogative clause. The last chapter provides a final evaluation of the prevailing tendencies of the usage of interrogative structures in the discourse of social media. A list of all occurrences assembled on social media platforms with their digital link is included in the Appendices at the end of the thesis.

# **1 DEFINITION OF ELECTRONIC DISCOURSE**

When examining social media discourse, we come across a division where electronic discourse is perceived as a parent group to social media discourse. Under this division, social media discourse is a subcategory of electronic discourse. Thus, electronic discourse will be described initially.

Brewer and Davis define electronic discourse as a form of interactive electronic communication between a sender and a recipient using a keyboard. They add that this type of communication can appear between individuals or groups on both sides of the communication chain, thus being a sender and a recipient. (1997, 19) Another term closely connected to electronic discourse is computer-mediated communication (CMC). Crystal explains the difference between these two terms as follows: “‘electronic discourse’ emphasizes the interactive and dialogue elements; ‘CMC’ focuses on the medium itself.” (2001, 17) Crystal also uses his own term ‘Netspeak’ when talking about electronic communication between individuals. However, we should be aware that the word ‘speak’ in the title does not refer to speaking only but take into consideration both writing and talking as a tool of communication. (Crystal 2001, 17) Brewer and Davis agree that the term electronic discourse focuses on how individuals use the language to exchange ideas whereas CMC focuses mainly on the medium or the channel that transfer the messages (1997, 19)

For the purposes of this thesis, the term electronic discourse will be mainly used as the main goal is to examine the interrogative structure in the presented discourse, not to examine how the sites and services providing digital communication work in its general sense. However, to be able to examine electronic communication that takes place on social media, it is crucial to understand how social media as a system of exchanging messages through electronic devices works. Hence, the next chapter will deal with the term computer-mediated communication in more detail.

## **1.1 COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION**

As described in the previous chapter, CMC focuses mainly on the medium that is used to transfer messages between users. Simpson claims that CMC is an umbrella term that refers to human communication via computers. He divides CMC into two basic groups; synchronous CMC, where interaction takes place in real time, and asynchronous CMC, where participants are not necessarily online simultaneously. (2002, 414)

As Simpson suggests, synchronous CMC includes various types of text-based online chat, computer, audio, and video conferencing. (2002, 414) Crystal points out that in this type of CMC, users must be online to join and participate in a conversation. (2001, 130) In the environment of today's social media discourse, group, or one-on-one conversations between users on Facebook and Messenger or direct messages (dm's) on Instagram can be viewed as examples of synchronous CMC. However, we can observe an overlap between synchronicity and asynchronicity, as these chats can be entered at any time, even when users are not online, which stands against Crystal's rule. In addition, the user does not have to be online to receive a message. Nevertheless, this type of chat is most often used as a synchronous CMC, but the user has an option to use this type of communication asynchronously as well.

Examples of asynchronous CMC according to Simpson encompass email, discussion forums and mailing lists. Unlike synchronous CMC, asynchronous CMC does not require users to be online at all. (Simpson 2002, 414) In practice, this means that a message from a sender is not conditioned by the presence of a recipient, who can read the message at any time. In the context of social media, regular posts and comments on Facebook and Instagram walls and tweets on Twitter could be perceived as examples of traditional asynchronous CMC.

If we apply the concept of asynchronicity and synchronicity into the environment of social media, we can perceive signs of both synchronous and asynchronous CMC, often even within one social platform. These main functions of selected social media platforms Facebook/Messenger, Instagram and Twitter will be further described in the analytical part.

## **1.2 SOCIAL MEDIA DISCOURSE AS A SUBCATEGORY OF ELECTRONIC DISCOURSE**

As described in the previous chapter, social media discourse could be perceived as a subcategory of electronic discourse. Page et al. use the term "social media" when referring to Internet-based sites and services that provide a basis for social interaction between participants (2014, 5) In practice, this means that social media is a platform where users can communicate with each other using digital devices. This objective is supported by Zappavigna who describes social media as web-based services that facilitate some form of social interaction or 'networking' (2012, 2). However, the term social media discourse also functions as an umbrella term for various groups of media that differ both in form and genre. (Page et al. 2014, 5) Different types of social media include discussion forums, blogs, wikis, video-sharing sites, and

social network sites (Page et al. 2014, 5). However, as the main objective is to examine interrogative structures in authentic interactions on social media, social media platforms Facebook and its parent app Messenger, Instagram and Twitter were chosen as the main sources of the corpus because of their high communication involvement between users.

### **1.3 THE INFLUENCE OF SPOKEN LANGUAGE ON THE DISCOURSE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

As social media discourse is a technology which enables its users to communicate between each other using digital devices, it can function as a substitute to typical face-to-face-conversation. Thus, this chapter introduces how written discourse on social media is influenced by spoken language.

Davis and Brewer describe the relationship between written and spoken language in electronic discourse accordingly: “electronic discourse is writing that very often reads as if it were being spoken that is as if the sender were writing talking.” (1997, 2) They justify it by comparing electronic communication to telephone conversations. In both, the interaction is transmitted by a technology that replaces face-to-face communication. (Davis and Brewer 1997, 2)

Leech and Svartvik explain that the most basic difference between written and spoken languages lies in the required speed to form a message. In written language, we usually have time to form a message and if needed, we can revise it later. On the other hand, in spoken language, the message is formed as we speak and cannot be prepared beforehand. (2002, 11) Similarly, Crystal agrees that in written language, there is always a time-lag between production and reception which allows the writer to re-read the message and sets an ideal environment for creating more complex sentence structures that can be identified through punctuation and layout (2001, 26) On the contrary, in spoken language, there is no time lag between production and reception of the message as the exchange of the message happens as the speech flows. Because the thought process happens simultaneously with talking, looser construction, repetition, and comment clauses e.g. *you know*, *you see* tend to occur as a result of spontaneity and speed of the exchange. (Crystal 2001, 26) In terms of social media and various CMC forms, it can be estimated that in social media discourse, structures may not always have to be influenced by spoken language according to the principle of asynchronicity and synchronicity that was explained in the previous chapter.

Another aspect of spoken language which is very often projected into electronic and social media discourse is the usage of contracted forms such as *isn't* or *he's*. Contracted forms are very often used in face-to-face conversations as an effective means to get the point across faster. It could be estimated that in social media discourse contracted forms are used with the same intention. This estimate is supported by Crystal who state that in the Internet environment, informal contracted forms of words and constructions are characteristic of speech (2011, 18)

In conclusion, it appears that the discourse of social media cannot be placed as an example of purely written or spoken language as it contains features that appear both in written and spoken language. Davis and Brewer point out that electronic discourse has many characteristics of both speaking and writing. They explain that electronic communication is written on keyboards which is a feature of written language but is read on computer screens, therefore the influence of spoken language is apparent. (1997, 2) Social media discourse could be viewed as a new variety of English that stands between written and spoken language and consists features of both written and spoken language.

To understand why interrogative structures in social media discourse get influenced by the spoken language, the relationship between interrogative structure and communication on social media discourse needs to be explained. Biber et al. state that interrogative clauses are frequent in conversations (1999, 203). As proposed in the previous chapter, social media discourse can to some extent substitute face-to-face conversations into their text-form, and therefore an interrogative structure in social media discourse can differ in its usual form as spoken language plays an important role in this issue. Quirk et al. explain: "In conversation and written dialogue, it is common to find ellipsis in sentences that respond to, comment on, or question previous sentences spoken by another speaker." (1985, 848) Carter and McCarthy (2006) mark this type of question as an elliptical question and state that they often appear in informal spoken contexts because there is no need to include all verb elements. This specific group of reduced forms of interrogative clauses will be further examined in Chapter 2.3 of this thesis.

## **2 DEFINITION OF INTERROGATIVE STRUCTURE FROM A SYNTACTIC POINT OF VIEW**

When examining various structures in the English language, we come across the terms 'sentence' and 'clause' in which these structures appear. Biber et al. state: "Independent clauses correspond to what is generally defined as sentences in other grammars" (Biber et al. 1999, 202). For instance, Quirk et al. (1985) distinguish four sentence types, whereas Biber et al. work

with the term structural types of clauses (1999). For the purposes of this thesis, Biber's terminology will be applied when examining interrogative structures.

In terms of structural types of clauses, we distinguish between four basic groups; declarative clause, interrogative clause, imperative clause and exclamative clause (Biber et al. 1999, 202). Similarly, Huddleston and Pullum divide clauses into five major categories. Apart from declarative, exclamative and imperative, interrogative is further subdivided into closed interrogative and open interrogative (2002, 854). On the other hand, Quirk et al., who select to use sentence types rather than clause types, categorize simple sentences into four major syntactic types: declaratives, interrogatives, imperatives and exclamatives (1985, 803). Even though Huddleston and Pullum (2002) and Quirk et al. (1985) differ in the terminology of describing interrogatives, Huddleston and Pullum's term 'closed interrogative' corresponds with Quirk et al.'s term 'yes-no interrogatives' and likewise, 'open interrogative' corresponds with wh-interrogatives.

Quirk et al. state that the division of four sentence types is associated with four classes of discourse functions: statements, questions, directives and exclamations (1985, 803–804). Similarly, Biber et al. distinguish between structural types (declarative clause, interrogative clause, imperative clause, exclamative clause) and functional types (statement, question, command/request, exclamation) and state that many grammars choose to use these functional terms interchangeably with the structural ones (1999, 202). However, for the purposes of this thesis, these two terms will be treated separately as this paper aims to focus on both structure and communicative function of an interrogative structure. Hence, the following subchapters will focus on various interrogative structures but briefly introduce other structures as well. The following chapter is then devoted to the communicative functions of an interrogative clause.

## **2.1 OTHER STRUCTURAL TYPES OF CLAUSES**

As introduced in the previous chapter, four principal structural types of independent clauses include an interrogative clause, declarative clause, imperative clause and exclamative clause. (Biber et al. 1999, 202) This chapter briefly introduces other structural types of clauses apart from an interrogative clause that will be further examined in the next chapter.

### 2.1.1 DECLARATIVE CLAUSE

Declarative clauses usually follow the sequence of a subject (S) and verb (V) to form an SV structure which is typical for statements (Biber et al. 1999, 203). Similarly, Quirk et al. describe declaratives as sentences in which the subject is present and generally precedes the verb, as in the following example:

(1) *Pauline gave Tom a digital watch for his birthday.* (Quirk et al. 1985, 803).

As example (1) shows, a declarative clause starts with a subject (*Pauline*) followed by a verb (*gave*). A direct object (*a watch*), indirect object (*Tom*) and adverbial (*for his birthday*) may be present as well. Huddleston and Pullum state: “Declarative is the default clause type: a clause is declarative if it lacks the special properties that define the other types.” (2002, 855). In this approach, a declarative clause is viewed as a basic clause type that does not have the distinctive properties of other clauses.

### 2.1.2 IMPERATIVE CLAUSE

Biber et al. describe imperative clauses as clauses that typically do not include a subject, use the base form of the verb, and lack modals as well as tense and aspect markers (1999, 219). Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 857) and Quirk et al. (1985, 827) also share the same opinion on what language properties imperatives have. The following example shows a typical imperative structure:

(2) *Get off the table.* (Biber et al. 1999, 219)

Huddleston and Pullum refer to these types of imperative clauses as ‘ordinary imperatives’ which is the default subclass and further divide this class into let-imperatives as well (2002, 924). The following example illustrates this subclass:

(3) *Let’s open the window.* (Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 924)

### 2.1.3 EXCLAMATIVE CLAUSE

As Quirk et al. explain, the exclamative structure starts with an initial phrase of *what* or *how* and usually follows subject-verb order (1985, 803). Accordingly, Hornová and Ježková suggest that structure of exclamatory sentences looks similar to questions because of the initial wh-element but the rest of the sentence usually follows the SV structure which is typical for



statements (2015, 95). The following example shows an exclamative structure in a form of a full exclamative clause:

(4) *How delightful her manners are!* (Quirk et al. 1985, 833)

Biber et al. state: “Exclamations can be expressed in a range of structures, both clausal and nonclausal.” (1999, 219) Apart from full exclamative clause structure, an exclamative clause can have a form of a phrase, as the following example illustrate:

(5) *What a cheek!* (Biber et al. 1999, 219)

## **2.2 INTERROGATIVE CLAUSE**

The introductory chapter explained the differences between terminology when defining an interrogative structure, provided various perspectives on this issue and presented a brief overview of other structures apart from the interrogative structure. The following chapter focuses on the main point of the thesis, thus being an interrogative structure that appears in an interrogative clause.

If we want to analyse interrogative structures, it is necessary to divide them into appropriate groups according to how the interrogative structure is formed. As Quirk et al. (1985) state, major syntactic types correlate largely with discourse functions. In the case of an interrogative clause, the corresponding discourse function is a question. As an interrogative structure can vary in different types of questions, an interrogative structure will be described in terms of the typology of questions in which this structure appears.

### **2.2.1 FORM OF YES–NO QUESTIONS**

Quirk et al. (1985, 807) and Biber et al. (1999, 206) both use the classification of yes–no questions only with a minor change of punctuation marks; in Quirk et al. (1985) the term is written with a dash (yes–no questions), but in Biber et al. (1999) the term is written with a slash and a dash follows (yes/no–questions). Huddleston and Pullum also deal with this type of question but use the term closed interrogatives instead. (2002, 856) In this thesis, Quirk et al.’s terminology will be used. A yes–no question usually starts with an operator, which is followed by a subject (Biber et al. 1999, 206). Likewise, Quirk et al. state that in a yes–no question, the operator is placed before the subject and add that this sentence structure has a rising intonation

(1985, 807). Based on their name, these types of questions ask if the proposition is true or false (Hornová and Ježková 2015, 91).

(6) *Is Ann writing a paper?*

(7) *Was our team beaten?* (Biber et al. 1999, 206)

As examples (6) and (7) show, the expectable answer to these questions would be *yes* or *no*. In terms of the influence of spoken language, which is typical for social media discourse, answers like *yeah*, *mm*, *okay*, *yep*, *nah* and *nope* can be used as well (Carter and McCarthy 2006, 718)

If there is not an item in the verb phrase that could function as an operator, *do* is introduced:

(8) *They live in Sydney.* → ***Do they live in Sydney?***

(9) *He likes driving.* → ***Does he like driving?*** (Quirk et al. 1985, 807).

Huddleston and Pullum mention that subject–auxiliary inversion is a *do*-support construction and therefore empty *do* is required when there is not an auxiliary verb present (2002, 856). Apart from the verb *be* that functions as the operator, similarly the verb *to have* often acts as an operator in British English, but informally *have ... got* is more common, as the following examples illustrate:

(10) *Patrick was late.*                      *Was Patrick late?*

(11) *She has a cold.*                      *Does she have a cold? (esp AmE)*

*Has she (got) a cold? (esp BrE)* (Quirk et al. 1985, 807)

According to Biber et al., yes–no questions are very often elliptic, especially in colloquial register (1999, 206)

(12) *You alright?*

(13) *Got what you want?*

(14) *Alright? Anything else?*

(15) *There's more gravy here. Anybody?* (Biber et al. 1999, 206)

If we focus on these semi-interrogative structures in detail, we can observe several elements that were left out. In example (12), the operator *to be* is omitted and in (13) the operator *to have* together with the subject *you* is missing. Biber et al. explain that in examples (14) and (15), questions are formed by a phrase rather than a clause. Hence, it is not possible to reconstruct a non-elliptical version of the interrogative clause with certainty. (1999, 207)

Yes–no questions can be further subdivided into positive yes–no questions and negative yes–no questions (Quirk et al. 1985, 808).

### 2.2.1.1 FORM OF POSITIVE YES–NO QUESTIONS

In positive yes–no questions, non-assertive forms such as *any* or *ever* are usually present. These forms are generally neutral oriented, which means that either a positive or negative answer is expected. (Quirk et al. 1985, 808) Examples of positive yes–no questions are illustrated down below:

(16) *Did anyone call last night?*

(17) *Do you live anywhere near Dover?* (Quirk et al. 1985, 808)

These questions could be answered either by *yes* or *no* as there is no indication one answer would be preferred over the other, therefore they have neutral polarity. In other words, we can say that the reply to these types of questions is open (Hornová and Ježková 2015, 91).

When the speaker is predisposed to the kind of question that is wanted or expected, we talk about conducive sentences. Quirk et al. state: “A question that, is not conducive, i.e. that has no bias for eliciting a positive or negative response, can be said to have neutral polarity”. (1985, 808) Hence, a positive oriented sentence triggers a positive oriented answer and vice versa. This can be achieved by using assertive forms instead of usual non-assertive forms such as *some*, *always*, *already* and other forms that indicate that a positive answer is expected (Leech and Svartvik 2002, 95) The following examples show positively oriented conducive yes – no questions:

(18) *Did someone call last night? ('Is it true that someone called last night?)*

(19) *Has she gone to bed already? ('Am I right in thinking that she's gone to bed already)* (Leech and Svartvik 2002, 95)

By using an assertive form *someone* instead of a non-assertive form *anyone* in example (18), the speaker predisposes that someone has called and may ask for confirmation or more detailed information about the situation. Similarly, in example (19), the speaker of the question expects that she has already gone to bed and therefore uses assertive form *already* which is positively oriented unlike non-assertive form *yet*, which would have a neutral polarity, as Leech and Svartvik suggest (2002, 95).

### 2.2.1.2 FORM OF NEGATIVE YES–NO QUESTIONS

Unlike the previous subcategory of positive yes–no questions, negative yes–no questions are always conducive, which means that the speaker is biased to express either a positive or negative response. A negative orientation is marked by a negative form of one kind or another. (Quirk et al. 1985, 808)

(20) *Don't you believe me?*

(21) *Have they never invited you home?* (Quirk et al. 1985, 808)

In example (20), the negative orientation is set by a verb in negative form. On the contrary, in examples (21), the negative orientation is set by no-negation. In both examples, the speaker presupposes a negative response and therefore uses a conducive structure in according form.

### 2.2.2 FORM OF WH-QUESTIONS

Quirk et al. (1985), Biber et al. (1999) and Eastwood (1994) all use the terminology of wh-questions as one of the major types of questions. However, Huddleston and Pullum (2002) use the term variable questions instead. In this thesis, the terminology of wh-questions will be applied. The main difference between yes–no questions and wh-questions is explained by Leech and Svartvik (2002). They state that unlike yes – no questions that are limited with the possible answers *yes* or *no*, wh-questions are unlimited in the number of possible answers as long as they provide the information required by the wh-element. (2002, 94)

We could observe a different terminology in Eastwood who uses question words instead of wh-element, but both terms work on the same principle. (1994, 28) Quirk et al. also mention question words as well as wh-words (1985, 817). The wh-words include *who*, *whom*, *whose*, *what*, *which*, *when*, *where*, *how*, and *why*. (Quirk et al. 1985, 817)

According to Biber et al., a wh-question begins with a wh-element that specifies required information and has a falling intonation (1999, 204). Quirk et al. also mention the rule of wh-element that comes first in the sentence if a conjunct is not present. Similarly, a wh-word takes an initial position in the structure of a wh-question except when the wh-word is within a prepositional complement, as the following examples show. (Quirk et al. 1985, 817)

(22) *On what did you base your prediction?*

(23) *What did you base your prediction on?* (Quirk et al. 1985, 817)

When creating such interrogative constructions, we could choose between two options. Example (22) represents a formal style when the preposition comes before the complement, whereas in a less formal style, the complement precedes the preposition, as an example (23) demonstrates (Quirk et al. 1985, 817). Quirk et al. also states: "...neutral style generally requires that the wh-word comes first, but formal English requires that the wh-element as a whole comes first." (1985, 817) It is therefore apparent that in a less formal setting, for example in social media discourse, initial wh-element construction will be preferred, as it is more characteristic of the discourse.

Unlike yes–no questions, wh-questions do not always need inversion. Eastwood states: "When a question word is a subject, there is no inversion. The word order is the same as in a statement." (1994, 28). However, if a wh-element does not function as a subject of the interrogative clause, it triggers a subject-auxiliary inversion. A wh-word can function as an object, complement, or adverbial. (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, 873)

(24) *What happened? Who came?*

(25) *Who were they looking for?*

(26) *How long have they been waiting?* (Hornová and Ježková 2015, 92)

In example (24), the wh-element function as a subject, therefore the rule of inversion does not apply. Quirk et al. explain that in such cases when a wh-element is a subject, the rule of initial wh-element taking an initial position overrules the rule of inversion (1985, 818). In example (25), the wh-element functions as a direct object and in example (26), the wh-element function as an adverbial of time, therefore the rule of inversion applies.

When observing wh-questions in a spontaneous conversation, they are very often elliptic and may consist of only the wh-element (Biber et al. 1999, 205)

(27) *A: Oh it's six o'clock isn't it?*

*B: What?*

(28) *A: No, they're in hospital, badly injured.*

*B: What? What? Broken limbs?* (Biber et al. 1999, 205)

In example (27), the wh-element *what* is used to clarify the question, most probably by repeating it, whereas the wh-element *what* in example (28) functions as an inductive instrument

to gain more information from the addresser. Biber et al. also state: “*What* is frequently used to ask for repetition or to introduce a more specific question.” (1999, 205)

Another specific feature of *wh*-questions is the possible combination of several *wh*-elements in a question. According to Hornová and Ježková, the position of *wh*-elements depends on the speaker’s choice (2015, 92). Huddleston and Pullum refer to these types of questions as multi-variable questions, each *wh*-word representing a variable. Questions containing one *wh*-word are called single-variable questions. (2002, 874).

(29) *What have they written where?*

(30) *Where have they written what?* (Hornová and Ježková 2015, 92)

Both examples (29) and (30) represent an instance of multi-variable questions that contain two variables to choose from. The choice of composing the *wh*-elements depends on the speaker and his opinion on the importance of the two questioned matters.

Both Quirk et al. (1985) and Dušková et al. (1994) further subdivide *wh*-questions into positive *wh*-questions and negative *wh*-questions.

#### **2.2.2.1 FORM OF POSITIVE WH-QUESTIONS**

Rather than on form, positive *wh*-questions focus on meaning this type of question hold. Dušková et al. explain that a positive *wh*-question is presupposed by a positive statement. In other words, the presupposition of a positive *wh*-question is in accordance with its form and similarly, as in positive statements, is assumed to be true. (1994, 325) The following example explains the relation between positive *wh*-question and positive statement:

(31) *How often do you visit New York? You visit New York sometimes.* (Quirk et al. 1985, 819)

The example (31) shows that the presupposition of the question *How often do you visit New York* is a positive statement, as Quirk et al. suggest *You visit New York sometimes*. In other words, the speaker expects a positive answer and therefore uses a positive oriented question asking about the frequency of visits, which is set by a *wh*-word. Unlike in yes–no questions, where the presupposition cannot be determined to be either true or false, the presupposition of positive *wh*-questions can be identified from the form of the question (Dušková et al. 1994, 325)

### 2.2.2.2 FORM OF NEGATIVE WH-QUESTIONS

The principle of presupposition which was introduced when examining positive wh-question could be applied to negative wh-questions as well. Dušková et al. explain the relation between a negative wh-question and negative statement accordingly: "...a presupposition of a negative wh-question is a negative statement." (1994, 325) Both Dušková et al. (1994) and Quirk et al. (1985) state that negative wh-questions most often ask about the cause:

(32) *Why didn't you tell me?* (Quirk et al. 1985, 820)

The question in example (32) asks about the reason why the addressee did not do something. The form is typical for wh-questions with an initial wh-element and S-V inversion, the negative polarity is set by an auxiliary verb *to do* in negative form.

### 2.2.3 FORM OF ALTERNATIVE QUESTIONS

An alternative question typically contains a coordinator *or*, which signals the presence of possible alternatives (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, 869). Dušková also comments that alternative questions include a coordinator *or* and adds that there is an inversion between a subject and a certain verb. (1994, 320) As the structure of yes-no questions and wh-questions was already discussed, several similarities can be found when examining the form of alternative questions. Biber et al. state: "An alternative question is structurally similar to a yes-no question in opening with the operator followed by the subject..." (1999, 207). Similarly, Hornová and Ježková add that alternative questions are structurally similar to both yes – no and wh-questions (2015, 92). The difference between these structures is explained in the following examples:

(33) *Do you think he'll be any better?*

(34) *Do you want one or two?* (Biber et al. 1999, 206-207)

Both examples (33) and (34) start with the operator *do* that is followed by the subject *you*. However, in example (33), which is an example of a yes–no question, the expectable answer is *yes* or *no*, whereas, in example (34), an alternative of two possible answers is presented. Huddleston and Pullum (2002) state that a set of alternatives is derivable directly from the question itself (2002, 868). Therefore, the expected alternative is between one or two, as the question suggests. In other words, an alternative question asks which of the given option is valid. (Dušková 1994, 320)

An alternative question can present more than two possible answers, as the following example shows:

(35) *Would you like chocolate, vanilla, or strawberry (ice cream)?* (Quirk et al 1985, 823)

As can be seen from this example, the alternative question presents a set of alternatives for the addressee to choose from. In this case, the addressee can choose between three possible options: chocolate, vanilla, or strawberry ice cream. It is therefore possible to set an alternative question with more than two possible options if the context of the situation allows it.

#### 2.2.4 FORM OF QUESTION TAGS

Unlike the three major classes of questions which are yes–no questions, wh-questions and alternative questions, question tags represent a special type of interrogative clause that differs sharply both in form and use. (Biber et al. 1999, 204)

Biber et al. (1999) use the terminology of question tags unlike Quirk et al. (1985), who use the terminology of tag questions. A different term is used by Huddleston and Pullum (2002) who work with the term interrogative tags instead. Hornová and Ježková refer to this type of questions as ‘question-like’ additions to positive or negative statements and add that the form of this questions is the operator + the subject that is expressed by a pronoun (2015, 93). Likewise, Biber et al. (1999) and Quirk et al. (1985) agree that question tags consist of an operator and a personal pronoun. The following examples show such structure:

(36) *She's not a lesbian, **is she?***

(37) *She's so generous, **isn't she?*** (Biber et al. 1999, 208)

(38) *Louise works at the hospital, **doesn't she?*** (Eastwood 1994, 38)

As apparent from the examples (36), (37), and (38), the tags marked in bold have interrogative structure starting with the operator that is followed by a subject, both constituents taken from the main clause. Biber et al. explain that the main clause and the tag are generally opposite in polarity (1999, 208) The example (36) shows a positive tag that is added to a negative declarative clause which is marked by a not negation and the same principle can be applied vice versa. When a pronoun is not present in the main clause, as in the example (38), the subject of the tag must align with the subject of the statement, thus agree with its number, person and gender in the form of a pronoun (Quirk et al. 1985, 810) Hence, in the example (38), the subject



of the statement *Louise*, which is a female name, changes to *she*, which is a feminine personal pronoun and corresponds with the proper noun *Louise*. When the subject of the statement is a pronoun, it is repeated in the tag, as in the examples (36) and (37).

If the statement has no operator, the dummy auxiliary *to do* is used in the tag clause (Quirk et al. 1985, 810).

(39) *She knows you, doesn't she?* (Quirk et al. 1985, 810)

The example (39) represents a situation where the main clause contains only a lexical verb and no operator, therefore the auxiliary *do* in an appropriate form based on the polarity of the main clause is added to the tag clause.

### 2.2.5 FORM OF ECHO QUESTIONS

Eastwood explains that echo questions are used when a speaker does not understand what has been said to him or finds it hard to believe. (1994, 40) He adds that this type of question appears with or without inversion as the following examples show:

(40) *What have they done?*

(41) *They've done what?* (Eastwood 1994, 40)

The example (40) indicates that the structure of the echo question can either follow the usual interrogative structure with S-V inversion. The example (41) represents a situation where the structure resembles a declarative structure where inversion does not apply.

Hornová and Ježková state: “These questions can either repeat (or ‘echo’) a part of the original statements, replace some part by a wh- element, or simply react to the statement by a short yes–no question connected with the verb form of the statement.” (2015, 93) It is therefore important to understand that the form of echo questions can vary based on the speaker’s decision to formulate the question. Syntactically, echo questions are mostly of a polar or variable kind, but Huddleston and Pullum state that alternative echoes are also possible. (Huddleston and Pullum 2002, 886) In other terminology, echo questions can be classified under yes–no questions, wh-questions, or alternative questions.

In terms of structure, this thesis will not consider echo questions as a separate structural type because their structure is identical to the major types of questions. However, this type of question has a specific communicative function, therefore in terms of the communicative function, the echo question will be approached as a separate group.

### 2.3 REDUCED FORMS OF INTERROGATIVE CLAUSE

The previous chapters presented a typical interrogative clause in its complete form but also pointed out that interrogative structure can occur in reduced forms. The complete form of interrogatives usually appears in major types of questions, thus being yes–no questions, wh-questions and alternative questions, therefore this group of interrogative clauses will be referred to as major questions as their interrogative structure is prototypical. Carter and McCarthy state that other types of questions may be reduced clauses, phrases, or single words (2006, 716) This chapter serves as an outline of how the interrogative structure may differ from its typical form and how such structures will be referred to in this thesis.

Typically, yes–no questions, wh-questions and alternative questions have a complete interrogative form, however, in common speech they can form a reduced interrogative clause where a subject, auxiliary verb, or auxiliary verb can be omitted. Quirk et al. (1985), Biber et al. (1999), or Carter and McCarthy (2006) name these elliptical questions. In other cases, the interrogative structure can be formed by a wh-element only (Quirk et al. 1985, 848) Biber et al. also suggest that in spontaneous conversations, which is typical for social media discourse, wh-questions may consist of only a wh-word (1999, 205) The following examples show such structures:

(42) A: *You want some more bread, Nick?*

B: *Yes please.*

(43) *There should be three sheets coming down. You should have three by the time you've finished. Okay. Everybody got three sheets?*

(44) A: *Ready?*

B: *Yeah, in a minute.* (Carter and McCarthy 2006, 720)

(45) A: *I'm leaving.*

B: *Why?* (A - *Why are you leaving?*) (Quirk et al. 1985, 848)

As examples (42) and (43) show, the auxiliary verb is omitted in the clause; in example (42) it is auxiliary *to do*, in example (43) it is auxiliary *to have*. However, in other cases, auxiliary verb and subject are omitted in question, as example (44) shows, where subject *you* and auxiliary verb *to be* are omitted. Carter and McCarthy comment that subjects, auxiliary verbs, or a lexical

verb *to be* are often ellipted without the change of reference, which remains obvious to the speaker and listener. (2006, 719) It could be therefore estimated that a reduced interrogative clause with the omission of a subject or auxiliary verb could be reconstructed into its full form without ambiguities.

Another situation is displayed in example (45), where the question is represented by an isolated *wh*-element. Quirk et al. (1985) suggest that based on preceding sentences, the question can be reconstructed into its full form (1985, 848). Therefore, based on the statement *I'm leaving*, the full question *Why are you leaving?* suggested by Quirk et al. could be reconstructed. A different view is expressed by Biber et al., who state that questions represented by a phrase are impossible to reconstruct into a non-elliptical version of the interrogative clause with any certainty (1999, 207). As this concept deals with phrases that are structurally longer than single words, the same principle could be used for interrogative clauses consisting of only a *wh*-element. In this thesis, Biber's concept will be applied, therefore clauses realised by an isolated *wh*-element will be classified under minor questions to distinguish them from elliptical questions that were examined at the beginning of this chapter.

To conclude, it appears that major types of questions do not always have to appear in their complete form, but often have elliptical structure due to the influence of spoken language on the discourse. With regards to the researched discourse of social media, I expect that elliptical structures will be frequently presented.

### **3 COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS OF INTERROGATIVE CLAUSES**

As various interrogative structures were already analysed, the subsequent chapter will focus on communicative functions these structures can convey. In terms of structural types of clauses, we distinguish between declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamative clauses that represent various communicative functions, often called speech-acts as well. The relation between form and function could be taken from a definition of a speech act by Carter and McCarthy who state: "The term speech act refers to what the speaker or writer is doing in uttering a particular form of words." (2006, 680) Hence this chapter is concerned with the speaker's communicative intentions rather than on the form of these utterances, which were examined in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

As explained in the previous chapter, the communicative functions can be paired with their structural counterparts. Table 1 displays clause types and their corresponding communicative functions taken by Biber et al. (1999).

**Table 1:** The relation between structural and function types of clauses (Biber et al. 1999, 202)

Structural types	Functional types
Declarative clause	Statement
Interrogative clause	Question
Imperative clause	Command, request
Exclamative clause	Exclamation

When examining communicative functions of an interrogative clause, the corresponding communicative function is a question. However, Fareh and Bin Moussa explain that the match between form and function does not always hold true. They further state that interrogative clauses, which normally perform the function of a question, can be used to perform other communicative functions that are typical for other structural types of clauses. (Fareh and Moussa 2008, 146) This statement is supported by Carter and McCarthy, who state that a direct correspondence between clause types and speech acts is not always the case and point out that interrogative clauses are often used to perform other speech acts as well (2006, 682) Thus, the communicative functions that can be realised by an interrogative structure will be examined in the following subchapters.

### 3.1 QUESTION

The main communicative function that corresponds with an interrogative clause is a question. Quirk et al. state: “Questions are primarily used to seek information on a specific point.” (1985, 804) Carter and McCarthy agree and comment that prototypical questions ask for information that the asker is not familiar with (2006, 717). Huddleston and Pullum further name this communicative purpose an inquiry and point out that not all questions are in fact inquiries (2002, 867) However, a question with the purpose of eliciting information is a primary and

most prototypical communicative function of an interrogative clause that can appear in various types of questions, as the following examples show:

(46) *Where does she live?*

(47) *Do you think he'll be any better?*

(48) *Do you want one or two?* (Biber et al. 1999, 204–207)

Examples (46), (47), and (48), all share the same communicative function of seeking information. However, they are realised by multiple types of questions; in example (46) the interrogative clause is structurally a *wh*-question, example (47) represents a yes–no question and example (50) is represented by an alternative question. From these examples, it can be estimated that interrogatives with the function of a question can occur in a variety of interrogative structures and are one of the most universal means in this respect.

As suggested above, questions can be used for other communicative purposes other than seeking information. In some cases, a question can simply seek confirmation (Carter and McCarthy 2006, 717) as the following example shows:

(49) *I got very moody, didn't I?* (Carter and McCarthy 2006, 717)

This clause is structurally a tag question, however, the communicative function of this question is not to elicit information, but rather a confirmation of the statement in the first part of the clause, thus being a statement *I got very moody* in example (51). In this example, the speaker's intention is not to find out whether he/she was moody but seeks only a confirmation of his original statement in the clause. This conclusion can be supported by Leech and Svartvik who state: "Tag questions added to the end of a statement ask for confirmation of the truth of the statement". (2002, 95)

Similarly, as tag questions, echo questions are often used to seek confirmation and clarification as Carter and McCarthy state (2006, 726). They further explain that this communicative function is realised by repeating part of the speaker's utterance. (2006, 726). Therefore, the communicative function in such occurrences is not asking for a repetition, as Eastwood (1994) suggests, but to ask for clarification of the statement. In other words, we could presuppose that repetition functions as an instrument to clarify an utterance. The same idea is expressed by Biber et al. who agree that echo questions request confirmation of what was already stated by repeating part of the content (1999, 1101) Hence, asking for repetition will not be adjudicated

as a communicative function in this thesis. The following examples show echo question that seeks confirmation or clarification:

(50) *A: I don't see nothing in San Francisco.*

*B: Oh, did you say San Francisco?* (Biber et al. 1999, 1101)

(51) *A: I often eat bits of wood.*

*B: What do you eat/You eat what?* (Eastwood 1994, 40)

Example (50) is realized by an echo question that seeks confirmation of the original statement by repeating the structure of what was said earlier, as Biber et al. explain (1999, 1101) Example (51) represents a situation where the second speaker is asking for a clarification from the second participant in the conversation by repeating the original statement. We could observe that an echo question can be realised by complying with the typical interrogative structure where inversion applies (*What do you eat?*) or by a declarative structure with the wh-element at the end of the clause (*You eat what?*).

As explained in Chapter 2 of this thesis, echo questions vary in their form according to the speaker's decision on how to formulate the clause, as the preceding examples demonstrate. Therefore, efforts to reduce echo questions may result in an isolated wh-element that conveys corresponding communicative functions as echo questions. The following examples show such cases:

(52) *A: I often eat bits of wood.*

*B: What?* (Eastwood 1994, 40)

Example (52) demonstrates that an isolated wh-element can have the same communicative purpose as an echo question in example (51) regardless of its structure. In both examples (51) and (52), the speaker of the statement *I often eat bits of wood* is asked to clarify his statement by the second participant of the conversation. This conclusion can be supported by Biber et al. who state that *what* is frequently used to ask for repetition, which is an instrument that helps to clarify the original statement (1999, 205). It could be therefore concluded that in some cases, an echo question can be replaced by a wh-element without changing the communicative function if the context allows it.

### 3.2 REQUEST, COMMAND

Another function closely associated with an interrogative clause is request and command. The reason why interrogative structure is often used for making requests and commands is described by Carter and McCarthy (2006). They explain that using a bare imperative can be viewed as extremely forceful and in many ways impolite in English, thus many directive speech acts are formed using interrogative clause and modal verbs (2006, 539). Similarly, Huddleston and Pullum agree that directives are very often conveyed indirectly by interrogatives because indirect directives with interrogative form are considered to be more polite (2002, 939). Directives, or directive speech acts can be further divided into requests and commands and other directive speech acts. Leech and Svartvik (2002) and Carter and McCarthy (2006) agree that a command, often called instruction as well, is used to get a receiver to do something. The following examples show how commands with interrogative structure can look like:

(53) *Will you look at your handouts, now, please.*

(54) *Can you shut that door?* (Carter and McCarthy 2006, 539)

(55) *Will you behave!* (Biber et al 1999, 207)

In example (53), the directive speech act is expressed by an interrogative clause opening with the modal auxiliary *will* and appears to be without a question mark, which suggests the communicative function of a directive. Furthermore, the omission of the question mark implies that the clause does not expect an answer, but action from a receiver. In other cases, a question mark can be present at the end of a clause, as in example (54) which fully resembles a typical interrogative clause in form. However, the clause does not seek information but expects action from a receiver as in the previous example. In terms of punctuation marks, Huddleston and Pullum state that interrogatives with full stop reflect the primary directive force, whereas question mark the secondary question force (2002, 863). In other cases, as in example (55), the interrogative clause occurs with an exclamation mark that suggests the communicative function of a command where an exclamation mark occurs at the end of the clause. Despite the structure, the communicative purpose is highly directive in meaning; it represents a situation where the receiver of the command must do something (as in example 56), or differently, avoid certain demeanor (as in example 57) (Biber et al. 1999, 207).

However, as suggested at the beginning of this chapter, commands are often perceived as impolite and too direct, therefore requests are often used when the speaker does not order someone to do something, but rather ask the hearer if he is willing to do something (Leech and

Svartvik 2002, 130) Carter and McCarthy state that interrogatives with *can*, *could*, *will* and *would* are used when making requests, *will* being the most direct and *can*, *could* and *would* being less direct, thus considered to be more polite (2006, 687) Leech and Svartvik agree with this conception of directivity of modals and add that the auxiliaries *will/would* are used for willingness unlike the auxiliaries *can/could* that are used for ability (2002, 130) The following sentences show characteristic examples of an interrogative clause with the usage of modal verbs functioning as a request:

(56) *Will you pass the salt, please?*

(57) *Would you please pass the salt?*

(59) *Can you possibly give me a lift?*

(59) *Could you lend me your pen?* (Leech and Svartvik 2002, 130)

As apparent from the examples (56) and (57), the interrogative clause starts with the initial modal verb, example (57) representing a slightly more polite situation than example (56) based on the choice of a modal verb. Furthermore, examples (56) and (57) are concerned about the willingness of a receiver to perform a certain action; in this case, it is an action of passing the salt, whereas examples (58) and (59) represent the ability of a receiver to perform a certain action. From the examples, it is apparent that interrogative clauses can function as requests and perform a polite way of telling someone what to do unlike traditional directives with the corresponding imperative structure that can appear too brusque or peremptory, as Huddleston and Pullum point out (2002, 939)

### 3.2.1 ADVICE AND SUGGESTION

Apart from commands and requests, there are even more directive speech acts. As Leech and Svartvik state, when influencing other people is concerned, advice and suggestions are milder than commands. Furthermore, they explain that even though these leave the decision about what to do up to the hearer, in practice they are often used for the same communicative purpose as commands and instructions. (Leech and Svartvik 2002, 130–131)

Carter and McCarthy define advice accordingly: “Advice is a speech act where the speaker expresses their view of how the listener or others ought best to act to solve a problem or achieve a goal. “(2006, 687) On the other hand, suggestions are defined accordingly: “Suggestions are speech acts where the speaker proposes a course of action for the listener or others, which may



include the speaker.” (2006, 687) What they have in common is that it is up to the listener whether to choose to accept the advice or suggestion provided by the speaker. Advice-taking and suggestions are usually formed using negative interrogatives with *can* and *could*, as the following example suggests:

(60) A: *A nightmare to clean, because the leaves will fall off. They're cactuses, those ones. Like, where you get all the dust.*

B: *Can't you get some sprays like anti-dust sprays?* (Carter and McCarthy 2006, 689)

Example (60) represents advice using a modal *can* with the negative *not*. In this example, the second part of the conversation (B) provides advice for the speaker (A) and leaves it up to him to decide what to do. The reason why this example is advice is that the second part of the conversation (B) does not involve himself in the possible solution; when this precondition of involvement of the speaker is met, we usually classify this speech act as a suggestion (Carter and McCarthy 2006, 689). The following example shows an interrogative clause that functions as a suggestion:

(61) *Shall we take the early train?* (Easwood 1994, 27)

The example (61) represents an interrogative clause with the modal verb *shall*, which could be classified as a suggestion. Unlike previous examples, the speaker of the question involves himself in the possible solution; in this example, the involvement of the speaker is set by a personal pronoun *we* and therefore implies the communicative function of a suggestion where the speaker is very often included.

### 3.2.2 OFFER

A communicative function structurally similar to requests is an offer. The difference usually lays in subject and interpretation based on the context. Carter and McCarthy state that offers are speech acts in which the speaker volunteers to do something for the listener. An offer could be accepted or declined by the listener. (2006, 699) An offer can be created with the help of various modal verbs as the following examples indicate:

(62) *Would you like me to mail these letters?*

(63) *Shall I get you a chair?*

(64) *Can I open the door for you?* (Carter and McCarthy 2006, 699)

The communicative purpose in these examples is to ask the hearer if they would like to do something for them. Interrogatives with *can*, *could*, and *may* very often occur in interrogative clauses functioning as offers, *could* being more polite than *can* and *may* being the most polite and indirect option, as Carter and McCarthy (2006, 699) suggest.

### 3.3 STATEMENT

A function of a statement typically occurs in declarative clauses, however, in occasional situations, a statement can be realised by an interrogative clause. Typically, a statement is used to convey information (Eastwood 1994, 16) In connection to interrogatives functioning as a statement, Leech and Svartvik (2002) state that a rhetorical question functions as a forceful statement. Furthermore, they argue that a rhetorical question is more likely to be a forceful statement rather than an exclamation, as many grammarians, for example, Biber et al. (1999), Quirk et al. (1985) or Hornová and Ježková (2015) classify it. Furthermore, they explain: “A positive rhetorical question is like a strong negative statement; a negative rhetorical question is like a strong positive statement (Leech and Svartvik 2002, 120). The following examples describe interrogatives that function as a statement:

(65) *Is that a reason for despair? (‘Surely that is not the reason...’)*

(66) *Didn’t I tell you he would forget? (‘You know I told you...’)*

(67) *What difference does it make? (‘It makes no difference’)* (Leech and Svartvik 2002, 120)

The example (65) is structurally a positive yes–no question unlike example (66), which is a negatively oriented yes–no question. The example (67) is realized by a wh-question. Even though the structure corresponds with a typical interrogative structure, these sentences indirectly hint at their function of a statement that is also suggested in the brackets by Leech and Svartvik (2002). Example (65) that is a positive rhetorical question behaves like a negative statement and does not need an answer. Contrarily, example (66) represents a question with negative polarity, therefore the proposed response ‘*You know I told you*’ is positively oriented. All these instances do not seek information but function as a statement with a purpose to get the point across. For example, example (67) is not interested in the possible differences, but it is said to express the speaker’s point of view on that matter. It could be therefore assumed that interrogative structure that functions a statement is represented by rhetorical questions which

do not have specific structural features but are primarily used to express the communicative function of a statement.

### 3.4 EXCLAMATION

Even though exclamation as a communicative function most often occurs in exclamative clauses, in some cases interrogative clauses can have an exclamative function as well. Carter and McCarthy state: “Occasionally, clauses with affirmative or negative interrogative structure can also be used as exclamations.” (2006, 683) As proposed at the beginning of this chapter, the main function of an exclamation is to supply a sentence with emphasis and feeling (Eastwood 1994, 24). Similarly, Quirk et al. state: “Exclamations are primarily used for expressing the extent to which the speaker is impressed by something”. (1985, 805) A clause with an interrogative structure that function as an exclamation is often named an exclamatory question, for example by Quirk et al. (1985) or Hornová and Ježková (2015). The following examples present such occurrences:

(68) *Oh God, was I exhausted by the time I got home!*

(69) *Gosh! Hasn't she grown!* (Carter and McCarthy 2006, 685)

Structurally, sentence (68) contains a typical feature of an interrogative structure, thus being an inversion of a subject and verb. Similarly, in example (69) the structure resembles the usual structure of negative yes–no question, the only difference being in the use of punctuation marks. The reason behind using an exclamation mark instead of a more usual question mark could be to put stress or highlight that the clause is intended to have a primary force of an exclamation despite the interrogative structure.

The purpose of this sentence is not to elicit information, which is one of the main functions of an interrogative clause but to express emotion. For example, the sentence *Hasn't she grown!* does not intend to confirm or deny the information, but to express emotion, most likely a state of surprise. Furthermore, Carter and McCarthy suggest that exclamatives that have an interrogative structure do not demand any informative reply from the listener. (2006, 717) It could be therefore assumed that exclamation is emotionally oriented and its main function, even in the case of appearance in an interrogative structure, is to express an emotion, both positive and negative.

## **4 ANALYSIS**

In this part of the thesis, the analysis of selected authentic interactions containing interrogative structures from the environment of social networks is presented. Firstly, the aim of the research is set out. Secondly, the sources of the linguistic corpus are described together with the methodology that has been used to gather the relevant examples of interrogative structures in social media discourse. Subsequently, the analysis is conducted focusing on the use, form, and communicative functions of interrogative structures in social media. The result of the analysis is an evaluation of the prevailing tendencies of the usage of interrogative structures in the discourse of social media.

### **4.1 AIM OF THE RESEARCH**

The research aims to map the occurrence of interrogative structures in social media discourse and to comment on the use, form and communicative functions of such structures in the context in which they occur. As discussed in the theoretical part, the influence of spoken language can oftentimes trigger the usage of interrogative structures that differ from the usual form of an interrogative structure. Therefore, the aim is to investigate to what extent the typical interrogative structure differs in such an environment, comment on the frequency of such occurrences and analyse the communicative functions of such structures.

### **4.2 SOURCE OF THE CORPUS AND METHOD OF RESEARCH**

For this purpose, the social networks Facebook/Messenger, Instagram and Twitter are used as the main sources from which the corpus is compiled. The reason why several social media platforms were used to collect corpus is to maintain objectivity and obtain various occurrences of interrogative structures across the environment of social media. The method of research is a corpus study that consists of 200 assembled instances of interrogative structures used in interactions on social media. However, the aim is to map the use of interrogative structures in social media discourse, not to compare such structures within social media platforms, therefore the corpus samples were not taken evenly from these three sites. Furthermore, a different number of interrogative structures appear on Facebook/Messenger, Instagram and Twitter; Facebook/Messenger being the most prominent in the occurrence of such structures, therefore this fact is reflected in the corpus. All occurrences from which the corpus was compiled were

randomly selected and did not go through any elimination process to influence the results of the analysis.

The corpus samples are assigned into parent groups according to their structure: major questions with typical interrogative structure, elliptic questions with elliptical structure and minor questions with fragmentary structure. Major questions are divided according to the typology of questions; yes–no questions and wh-questions as the most numerous representatives of major questions are further subdivided according to the communicative function. Occurrences with the elliptical structure were divided according to the missing sentence element, thus a subject, auxiliary verb, lexical verb, or the omission of a subject together with an auxiliary verb. Minor questions are divided according to the fragment which substitutes interrogative structure. As the fragmentary structure cannot be defined as unequivocally as the structures in the previous two groups, minor questions are the most various group in terms of the diversity of occurrences. In each corpus sample, the communicative function and the source are given.

It is necessary to highlight the importance of context when identifying communicative functions of corpus samples. Unlike structure, the communicative function is highly dependent on context and interpretation, therefore ambiguities in interpretation can appear as the analysis is approached from the role of an external agent which is not part of the interaction. In addition, some interactions appeared incomplete, therefore their interpretation may vary. Nevertheless, the thesis attempts to maintain as much objectivity as possible and provide multiple viewpoints of the occurrences which seem to be ambiguous in terms of possible interpretation.

### **4.3 SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS**

The introductory chapter presents the selected types of social media that have been also used as sources of the corpus in the analytical part of the thesis. It focuses on the specifics of each social media platform within the computer-mediated communication (CMC) based on asynchronicity and synchronicity and the influence of spoken language.

#### **4.3.1 FACEBOOK/MESSENGER IN SOCIAL MEDIA DISCOURSE**

Facebook is currently one of the most popular and universal social media and networking sites (Graybill 2010, 7). According to Statista, Facebook had over 2.7 billion monthly active users in the second quarter of 2020, which makes it the biggest social platform (Statista 2021). In terms of communicative functions, Facebook can be divided into several parts: Facebook wall,

private messaging also known as Messenger, and other minor parts such as Facebook Market, whose primary function is not communication between users and therefore will not be important for the goal of this thesis.

As social media networks consist of both synchronous and asynchronous computer-mediated communication (CMC), the corpus samples should include examples from both synchronous and asynchronous CMC to ensure that the whole social platform is obtained. Examples of synchronous CMC on Facebook include posts and comments on Facebook Wall, various Facebook groups and comments on Facebook profiles. As stated in the theoretical part, asynchronous CMC on social media does not take place in real-time and does not require users to be online at all. (Simpson 2002, 414). As a result, utterances written in such an environment tend to appear in complete structures, as the asynchronous environment allows its users to re-read their message and edit it if necessary before it is sent.

Facebook in its synchronous form is provided by a messaging app and platform called Messenger Facebook, which was developed by Facebook, Inc. but since 2011, operates as an independent platform (Facebook 2021). Messenger can be identified as an instance of synchronous CMC, as the messaging usually contains both users to be online and text in real-time. With synchronous forms of communication, users tend to use looser constructions, as the main purpose is to spread the message as fast as possible, therefore the structure of the utterance is not as important as the communicative function it conveys. As Davis and Brewer explain, electronic communication is written on keyboards which is a feature of written language but is read on computer screens, therefore the influence of spoken language is apparent (1997, 2) Unlike Facebook, the platform Messenger is mainly used as a mobile app. As the communication is transferred through mobile phones, it is assumed that the structure of the utterance, as well as the individual words, may be shortened and typos may occur. In this thesis, Facebook and Messenger will be considered as one group that consists of multiple CMC forms.

#### **4.3.2 INSTAGRAM IN SOCIAL MEDIA DISCOURSE**

Instagram is a photo-sharing social networking app with more than 1 billion monthly active users as of June 2018 (Statista 2021). From the very beginning, Instagram has been conceived based on communication through photos that are posted on Instagram feed and to which a text could be attached. In this purely asynchronous environment, where the user can comment on the photo at any time regardless of the user's online status, in 2013, Instagram set up its own chat unit within the platform and name it Instagram direct messages (often referred to as dm's on Instagram). Direct messages on Instagram work on the same principle as Messenger,

therefore, provide a service for their users to communicate between themselves mainly in real-time. Similarly, as for Messenger, Instagram is primarily used in its mobile app version. It is therefore apparent, that the social platform Instagram follows the transition, where within one platform, users can use asynchronous and synchronous CMC at the same time.

### **4.3.3 TWITTER IN SOCIAL MEDIA DISCOURSE**

According to Statista, Twitter is an online social networking service with 330 million monthly active users (Statista 2021). Twitter is the only media platform of the social networks used for this analysis that works on only asynchronous form. On Twitter, users cannot write messages between each other, as was the case with the synchronous forms of Facebook and Instagram, but users can react to each other in the form of tweets and retweets. By definition, a tweet is a message posted on Twitter and subsequently, a retweet is a textual reaction to a tweet (Twitter 2021).

Although it may seem from the CMC's point of view that shortened forms of words and structures will not be common on Twitter because of asynchronicity, is not a completely true deduction. As a social platform, Twitter limits its users to the extent of the message they can publish to a maximum of up to 280 characters (Twitter 2021). Based on such criteria, it can be estimated that shortened structures may appear due to limited message length.

## **4.4 RESULTS**

Findings in Table 2 show that in all 200 occurrences of an interrogative structures on social media, 120 of them (60%) appeared in the prototypical interrogative structure, 52 occurrences (26%) were formed by elliptical structure and 28 instances (14%) occurred with fragmentary structure. More than half of all instances have an interrogative structure that many grammarians refer to as the usual interrogative structure unaffected by the influence of spoken language. Although the results may imply that the discourse of social media is not as informal as estimated having the highest percentage in a typical interrogative structure, such structures often follow features of informal style, such as changes in capitalization or punctuation. These stylistic features and the possible interpretations for their usage are described in Chapter 4.4.4. The influence of spoken language, which sets an informal setting in social media discourse, creates looser and incomplete constructions that are represented by categories of elliptic and minor questions which occurred in a minority of proportion compared to complete interrogative

structure. According to the theoretical part, the structural groups are further analysed in the following chapters.

The second part of the analysis focuses on the communicative functions of interrogative structures that appear in social media discourse. The results in Table 3 show that interrogative structure most often corresponds with its prototypical function of a question, as 147 instances out of 200 instances were classified under the communicative function of a question (73.50%). Other communicative functions were represented only in a minority of cases; requests appeared in 29 instances (14.50%), statements in 14 instances (7.00%) and exclamations in 10 instances (5.00%). These basic communicative functions are further analysed in subchapters according to the type of function. It is important to consider that communicative functions are context-based, and it is, therefore, possible that some examples could be interpreted differently. Such instances are reflected in the individual subchapters.

**Table 2:** Structural types findings overall

<b>Structural Types</b>	<b>absolute</b>	<b>%</b>
Prototypical Structure	120	60.00%
Elliptical Structure	52	26.00%
Fragmentary structure	28	14.00%
Total	200	100.00%

**Table 3:** Communicative functions findings overall

<b>Communicative Functions</b>	<b>absolute</b>	<b>%</b>
Question	147	73.50%
Request	29	14.50%
Statement	14	7.00%
Exclamation	10	5.00%
Total	200	100.00%

#### **4.4.1 INTERROGATIVE STRUCTURE IN MAJOR QUESTIONS**

The first analysed group in terms of structure are major questions with prototypical interrogative structure. The category of major questions has been subdivided to yes–no questions, positive and negative wh-questions, alternative questions and question tags. The reason why yes–no questions are not arranged according to their polarity is due to non –



occurrence of yes–no questions with negative polarity. As established in the theoretical part, echo questions will not be distinguished as a separate structural type because of their structure that corresponds with the major types of questions.

Table 4 shows that the most represented types of questions were wh-questions with 62 occurrences (51.67%) and yes – no questions with 56 occurrences (46.67%). On the contrary, alternative questions and question tags appeared in only 2 instances (1.66% in total). From these data, it could be concluded that users on social platforms need both specific information when using wh-questions and also more general information in the form of yes – no questions that ask if the proposition is true or false, as Hornová and Ježková suggest (2015, 91).

(1) A: *Are you exercising?*

B: *Nope* (Appendix 1, 22)

(2) A: *What are you doing?*

B: *Talking with a friend* (Appendix 1, 50)

Example (1) shows an interrogative structure represented by a yes–no question unlike example (2) which is represented by a wh-question. In terms of form, example (1) shows a typical interrogative structure of a yes–no question starting with the operator in the appropriate form (*are*) which is followed by a subject (*you*) and lexical verb (*exercising*) that appears in inversion, which is a typical feature of an interrogative structure. The interrogative structure in example (2) starts with the wh-element and similarly as the previous example has S-V inversion and ends with a question mark. While the user in example (1) seeks information that could be answered by yes or no, the user in example (2) seeks more specific information than the previous example as it could not be answered simply by yes or no. In a social media environment, yes–no questions can be answered by other elements that are typically used in spoken interactions, as Carter and McCarthy state (2006, 718). Example (1) represents such occasion, where instead of the typical negative answer no, the informal version of no “nope” is used.

In terms of polarity, which is another aspect that can be analysed in yes – no questions and wh-questions, the analysis revealed that yes–no questions overall have neutral polarity as oriented yes–no question did not occur in the corpus. Similarly, samples of wh-questions showed only one instance of the negatively oriented interrogative structure. The possible reason behind using rather neutral oriented utterances may be that social media users do not use yes–no questions and wh-questions with the presupposition to find out whether their statement is true or false

based on their viewpoints but rather use such structures to obtain specific or more general information without previous assumption.

(3) A: ***Can we be Facebook friends?***

B: *Why*

A: *Because I would like that*

B: *Well it's not about what you want.*

A: *Why can't we be friends on Facebook*

B: *Because we aren't friends.* (Appendix 1, 40)

(4) A: *Can we be Facebook friends?*

B: *Why*

A: *Because I would like that*

B: *Well it's not about what you want.*

A: ***Why can't we be friends on Facebook***

B: *Because we aren't friends.* (Appendix 1, 118)

The structure in example (3), which is highlighted in bold, represents a question with a neutral polarity, unlike example (4) which is negatively oriented. The speaker of example (3) does not presuppose that there may be an obstacle in him and the other participant becoming friends therefore the neutral structure is used. However, as he receives a negative answer, he transforms the same utterance into its negative form. Based on the negative response, he presupposes that they cannot become friends and chooses to use a negatively oriented structure in which the speaker's assumption is present.

Contrarily, alternative questions that provide a set of alternatives to choose from in the question rarely appeared on social media as there was only 1 instance found in the corresponding structure of an alternative question (0.83%). Therefore, we could assume that when a user seeks specific information in a social media environment, he is more likely to use wh-questions which asks specifically rather than to provide alternatives to choose from. Similarly, tag questions occurred in only one instance (0.83%). Quirk et al. state that question tags convey positive or negative orientation (1985, 810) From this statement it could be concluded that interrogative structures with neutral orientation are preferred over positively or negatively oriented structures similarly as oriented yes – no questions and wh-questions also rarely appeared in social media discourse.

Another aspect that can be analysed in wh-questions is the usage of contracted forms of auxiliary verbs. As suggested in the theoretical part, contracted forms very often appear in face-to-face conversations to get the point across faster. In written English, contracted forms are mainly used in an informal setting, as González suggests (2007, 23). As social media discourse could be classified as in informal setting, several contracted forms were found:

(5) *What's a good age to have kids?* (Appendix 1, 102)

(6) *Whos dat dude with the hat* (Appendix 1, 101)

Example (5) represents a typical form of contracted form of an auxiliary verb *to be* in the appropriate form with an apostrophe instead of a full verb *to be*. In terms of the influence of spoken language on social media discourse, example (6) is more interesting. The typical contracted form of an auxiliary verb appears without the apostrophe that signals the contracted form, making a particle consisting of only wh-element and letter *s*. In terms of using the contracted form without an apostrophe, it could be estimated that it is a result of an effort to get the point across faster by typing as few constituents as possible without making an utterance uncomprehensive.

**Table 4:** Major questions overall findings

Major Questions	absolute	%
Yes – no questions	56	46.67%
Wh-questions	62	51.67%
Alternative Questions	1	0.83%
Question Tags	1	0.83%
Total	120	100.00%

#### 4.4.2 INTERROGATIVE STRUCTURE IN ELLIPTICAL QUESTIONS

Another group of interrogative structures consists of elliptical structures, where a sentence element is omitted. This type of interrogative structure was present in 52 out of 200 instances (26%) as Table 2 shows. In this category, several subgroups were created according to the element that was missing in the structure. The corpus samples included the omission of a subject, auxiliary verb, lexical verb and the combination of a subject and auxiliary verb.

Findings in Table 5 revealed that the most omitted sentence element was an auxiliary verb which appeared in 27 out of 52 instances (51.92%), hence this group was further divided

according to the type of auxiliary verb that was omitted. Out of the 23 instances, the prominent omitted element was auxiliary *to do* with 15 occurrences (28.85%) and auxiliary *to be* which appeared in 8 occurrences (15.38%); auxiliary *to be* was omitted in minor cases (7.69%). However, the lexical verb *to be* can also be omitted, such occurrence appeared in 10 instances (19.23%).

(7) *How ya Doing* (Appendix 1, 134)

(8) *When we getting coffee?* (Appendix 1, 138)

(9) *U awake?* (Appendix 1,123)

(10) *You alright?* (Appendix 1, 127)

If we examine the interrogative structure of examples (7) and (8), it is apparent that the structure is incomplete because the auxiliary verb *to be* functioning as an operator is absent. As Biber et al. state, structures, where the operator is absent, can be reconstructed into their complete form (1999, 207). In fact, the operator has only a grammatical meaning, therefore omitting such element does not create any possible ambiguities in the meaning of the utterance. However, the corpus findings show that omitting auxiliary *to be* was similarly frequent as omitting lexical verb *to be*. Such structure is represented by examples (9) and (10). Even though a lexical verb *to be* is omitted, the remaining sentence elements provide enough information for an addressee to understand the utterance without ambiguities. It could be therefore estimated that structures, where the verb *to be*, is missing is not problematic to understand for online media users regardless if the verb is auxiliary or lexical.

The second most generous group consisted of elliptical structure with the omission of a subject together with an auxiliary verb, which was present in 14 occurrences in total (26.92%) as Table 5 suggests. Contrarily, elliptical structures with the omission of a subject appeared in only 1 instance (1.92%). Based on these results, we can conclude that if there is no subject in the elliptical structure, the auxiliary verb will most likely not be present as well. The results further revealed that in such structures, the auxiliary verb *to do* was present in all instances. The omission of two sentence elements may present greater ambiguity in the completion of the whole form of non-elliptical structure, particularly the subject of the utterance may not be apparent and therefore may create misinterpretations of the whole structure. Hence the context and communicative function must be taken into consideration when reconstructing such structures into their full form:

(11) *Want something to eat?* (Appendix 1, 171)

(12) *Wanna be friends?* (Appendix 1, 162)

As examples (11) and (12) show, the context is crucial to interpret the utterance correctly. The communicative function of structures where a subject and auxiliary verb is missing was marked as an offer in most of the instances (92.86%) which can help in reconstructing a non-elliptical structure of the utterance. An offer is aimed from a speaker of such utterance to a listener; therefore, an offer is conditioned by the presence of at least 2 participants. This conclusion is supported by Carter and McCarthy who state that offers are speech acts in which the speaker volunteers to do something for the listener (2006, 699). Hence, it could be stated that the communicative function of an elliptical structure with the omission of a subject and an auxiliary verb helps to reconstruct the missing subject to make the utterance unambiguous. Furthermore, the context also implies that the utterance is aimed at the receiver of the message, which is the missing subject in the structure, as in social media the participants in the interaction send messages between each other. To conclude, an incomplete interrogative structure where a subject, auxiliary verb, or combination of both is missing does not create difficulties in interpretation as the complete interrogative structure can be reconstructed based on context and communicative function.

**Table 5:** Elliptical questions overall findings

Elliptical Questions		absolute	%
Absence of a subject		1	1.92%
Absence of a lexical verb <i>to be</i>		10	19.23%
Absence of an auxiliary verb	<i>to be</i>	8	15.38%
	<i>to do</i>	15	28.85%
	<i>to have</i>	4	7.69%
Absence of a subject and auxiliary verb		14	26.92%
Total		52	100.00%

#### 4.4.3 INTERROGATIVE STRUCTURE IN MINOR QUESTIONS

The last group analysed in terms of structure are minor questions with fragmentary structure. As the structure suggests, minor questions are not complete in form but rather appear in fragments that signal that the structure is indeed interrogative. As apparent from Table 2, the fragmentary structure appeared in only 14.00% in all instances.

This group of questions has been further divided into subgroups according to the fragments that substitute the typical interrogative structure. The first subgroup includes various isolated wh-elements and combination of wh-elements. The next subgroup represents such occurrences where an interrogative structure is set by an adverbial and the last group consists of text-speak abbreviations that substitute interrogative structure. One instance could not be classified into any group in terms of structure, therefore is included in indeterminate instances.

(13) A: *I'm breaking up with you.*

B: *Huh, why?* (Appendix 1, 190)

(14) A: *where have you been*

B: *asleep*

A: *for two days?* (Appendix 1, 196)

(15) A: *wyd?* (Appendix 1, 198)

The example (13), (14) and (15) represent the subcategories of minor questions. Example (13) consists of wh-element, example (14) is an instance of isolated adverbial and example (15) is a text-speak abbreviation. In each example, the subject, auxiliary or lexical verb is not present. Example (15) depicts a special category of minor questions consisting of an abbreviation that substitutes the interrogative structure.

Out of all 28 occurrences, 22 instances (78.57%) were represented by an isolated wh-element, as Table 6 shows. As the usage of wh-element appeared prominently in this group, it was further subdivided into individual wh-elements showing that wh-elements *what* in 8 instances (28.57%) and *why* in 11 instances (39.29%) were the most used isolated wh-elements. Structures realised by abbreviation appeared in 3 instances (10.71%). In minor cases, the combination of multiple wh-elements (3.57%) or interrogative structure set by an isolated adverbial (3.57%) was used.

(16) A: *hey wanna know something?*

B: *what?* (Appendix 1, 177)

(17) A: *It's Over*

B: *Why??* (Appendix 1, 191)

(18) A: *You*

*Im taking you somewhere when i get home*

***B: Where and why?***

*A: The city and because i want to I haven't been in a while (Appendix 1, 195)*

As apparent from examples (16) and (17), the interrogative structure resembles a wh-question, however only the introductory wh-element is present. The incomplete structure may indicate that the isolated wh-element is used as means to move the conversation forward which is very typical for communication on social media discourse. In these instances, it may be redundant to use the full form of interrogative structure as the structure consisting of isolated wh-element responds to the previous statement. Examples (16) and (17) show that wh-element can react to a previous utterance which is a question, as in example (16) or to a statement, as an example (17) demonstrates. Unlike typical interrogative or elliptical structure, the wh-element structure could not be used at the start of interaction as it is conditioned by the previous statement to which it responds. Example (18) represents two wh-elements that are combined. As such structure appeared in only 1 instance, it could be estimated that users on social media tend to use wh-elements separately.

A special category was created for abbreviated forms of interrogative structure. Despite this structure appeared in only 3 instances (10.71%), it is important to analyse it as it differs sharply from the other instances that were classified as minor questions.

(19) *wyd?* (Appendix 1, 198)

(20) *wyd* (Appendix 1, 199)

The example shows the abbreviated structure which comprises only 3 letters. Based on the fragmentary structure, these occurrences were classified under minor questions. The abbreviation “wyd” most often stands for “*What (are) you are doing?*” (Collins Dictionary 2021). The reconstructed form could be included in the elliptical question as only an auxiliary verb is omitted, as suggested in the brackets, however, we must respect the original structure of the corpus sample. The abbreviated interrogative structure is usual for informal settings as social media discourse; however, a user must be experienced with the environment to understand the abbreviation and the meaning behind it as the structure consists of only a single sentence element. Unlike other occurrences in this group that cannot stand at the beginning of the interaction, social media users can start the interaction with abbreviated “wyd” as its full reconstructed form is independent of the context.

As minor questions appear in fragments, there may be structures for which the complete structure cannot be constructed. In the corpus study, one instance could not be determined with certainty:

(21) A: *How are you?*

B: *Good I'm in a relationship now*

A: *Cool from online?*

*Didn't take long lol*

*Humor me*

*He a bad boy?*

B: *It weird you want to know*

*so I'm going to block you* (Appendix 1, 200)

This fragment that substitutes interrogative structure could be reconstructed in several ways. From a syntactic point of view, the incomplete structure starts with an adjective *Cool* and therefore we could presuppose that a subject and a lexical verb are omitted, and it is, therefore, an instance of an elliptical structure. However, the word *Cool* could also be perceived as a stand-alone element followed by a fragmentary structure consisting of isolated adverbial “*from online?*”. It is therefore evident that in some cases, the full interrogative structure cannot be reconstructed with certainty because of unfamiliarity with the situation context which is crucial in the interpretation.

**Table 6:** Minor questions overall findings

Minor Questions		absolute	%
Isolated wh-element	<i>what</i>	8	28.57%
	<i>why</i>	11	39.29%
	<i>other wh-elements</i>	3	10.71%
Combination of wh-elements		1	3.57%
Isolated adverbial		1	3.57%
Abbreviation		3	10.71%
Indeterminate		1	3.57%
Total		28	100.00%



#### **4.4.4 STYLISTIC SPECIFICS OF AN INTERROGATIVE STRUCTURE IN SOCIAL MEDIA DISCOURSE**

As introduced at the beginning of the analytical part, most interrogative structures in social media discourse appeared in their usual form. Despite the structure meeting the criteria of a prototypical interrogative structure, there are stylistics specifics that appear in social media which influences the formality of otherwise interrogative formal structure. For instance, a rule in the English language to start a clause with a capital letter is often abandoned by users on social media as well as using a punctuation mark at the end of a clause. The following subchapters examined the most prominent stylistics specifics that appeared in the corpus.

##### **4.4.4.1 ABBREVIATED YOU**

In terms of stylistic features, the personal pronoun *you* was used in several forms. Examples (17) and (18) show that the personal pronoun can appear in its full form as well as in the abbreviated form “*u*”. Another form of the personal pronoun *you* is represented in example (18) where *ya* is used instead of *you* which could be interpreted as an influence of pronunciation of the word *you* *ya* into its written form.

(22) *Have u always had the tattoo* (Appendix 16)

(23) *do u still like me* (Appendix 27)

(24) *How ya Doing* (Appendix 1, 134)

As apparent from the examples, the personal pronoun *you* can be shortened to an abbreviation *u*. In terms of structure and meaning, the meaning remains unchanged. As McCulloh (2015) suggests, using abbreviated “*u*” instead of the full form of the personal pronoun “*you*” is well established in casual written English, especially in an online environment. The usage of abbreviated *u* is most likely a consequence of the communication situation which takes place synchronously and its main goal is to get the point across, therefore abbreviated items are often used as it does not influence the meaning of an utterance.

##### **4.4.4.2 CAPITALIZATION**

Another feature of social media discourse that goes beyond the classical rules in written discourse is not using a capital letter at the beginning of a clause. Eastwood states that a written sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a mark (1994, 3). As mentioned in the

theoretical part, social media discourse shares the features of both written and spoken discourse, therefore changes in capitalization are expected because of communication in such an environment. The following examples represent such occurrences:

(25) *Why would you make me guess that* (Appendix 1, 117)

(26) *are you ok?* (Appendix 1, 4)

(27) *U ok?* (Appendix 1, 128)

(28) *How ya Doing* (Appendix 1, 134)

The example (25) represents a typical sentence structure in terms of capitalization with a first sentence element having a capital letter. However, in other cases, the rule of starting a sentence with a capital letter has been abandoned, as example (26) shows. The possible explanation could be that from a communicative function the utterance remains the same regardless of the initial capital letter and therefore users on social media can overlook this rule. If an operator is absent in the interrogative structure, the next sentence element, thus a subject, can take on the rule of the initial capital letter, even if it is in an abbreviated version, as an example (27) shows. Another usage of capitalization is demonstrated by example (28), where the sentence element *Doing* is written in a capital letter. As capital letters do not occur in the middle clause, this may be rather a result of a typing mistake than intentional use of the capital letter.

#### 4.4.4.3 PUNCTUATION

The next stylistic feature which influences the formality of social media discourse is the usage of various punctuation marks. Typically, the interrogative structure ends with a question mark, however, in the environment of social networks, the usage of other punctuation marks or complete omission of a punctuation mark may also occur in an interrogative clause.

(29) *What's wrong* (Appendix 1, 95)

(30) *A: There's one thing I'll never allow you to do*

*B: What* (Appendix 1, 176)

(31) *Hows your day going !!!* (Appendix 1, 94)

(32) *What u saying man???* (Appendix 1, 137)

Examples (29) and (30) represent the structure, where the question mark is absent at the end of the clause. The possible explanation may be that the structure of the wh-question is a sufficient signal that the speaker requires a response from the listener, therefore the question mark is

omitted. The same could be applied when only a wh-element is present, as it hints at the complete form of wh-question, as an example (30) suggests. This principle could be applied to declarative questions which unlike regular questions must include question marks because the declarative structure on its own would not be a sufficient signal that it is not just a statement but function as a question. In other cases, punctuation marks can be iterated to make the utterance more expressive. Such occurrences are represented by examples (31) and (32). Rather than signaling the interrogative structure, such usage of punctuation marks projects the speaker's attitude towards the issue.

#### 4.4.5 QUESTION

The following chapters provide further analysis of communicative functions that appear in interrogative structures on social media. As the function of a question appeared prominently in the researched discourse, it will be analysed initially. As Table 3 suggests, interrogative structures with the function of a question appeared in 73.50% of all instances. From this data, it could be concluded that in the discourse of social media, interrogative structures prominently occur with their prototypical function. According to the theoretical part, a question can function not only to seek information but seek confirmation and clarification as well. Thus, the following subchapters provide a more detailed analysis of both communicative functions.

##### 4.4.5.1 ASKING FOR INFORMATION

As findings in Table 7 display, 129 instances out of 147 instances labelled with the communicative function of a question ask for information (87.76%). The corpus data implies that the majority of interrogative structures with their prototypical function of question ask for information. Moreover, the results support the conclusion in the theoretical part that question with its prototypical communication can be labelled as the most universal because it occurred not only in various types of questions in their complete interrogative structure but also in the elliptical and fragmentary structure. The following examples represent such structures:

(33) A: *Are you exercising?*

B: *Nope* (Appendix 1, 22)

(34) *Why did you and your ex break up? Don't skip I wanna read ya stories* (Appendix 1, 76)

(35) A: *U eating healthy?*

*B: Yes! Today I made whole wheat crumble covered poultry pieces boiled in organic olive juice (Appendix 1, 139)*

(36) *A: hey wanna know something?*

*B: what? (Appendix 1, 177)*

The communicative function of examples (33), (34), (35) and (36) is to seek information. Example (33) and (34) is represented by the complete interrogative structure formed by yes – no question in example (33), and wh-question in example (34). However, examples (35) and (36) show that a speaker can ask for information using incomplete structures; auxiliary verb can be omitted, as an example (35) shows, or such communicative meaning can be conveyed by an introductory wh-element, as an example (36) demonstrates.

The findings furthermore show that yes – no questions that ask for information appeared in 26 instances, unlike wh-questions that appeared in 54 instances. If we compare the same communicative function with elliptical structure, the results imply that elliptical structures that could be reconstructed into yes–no questions appeared in 17 instances and elliptical structures reconstructed into wh-question appeared in 8 instances. Moreover, structures consisting of isolated wh-question of 19 instances. It could be therefore stated in social media discourse, specific information is obtained more often than more general information.

#### **4.4.5.2 ASKING FOR CONFIRMATION AND CLARIFICATION**

The second analysed aspect that a question can convey is asking for confirmation and clarification. These specific communicative functions are included in one group because their occurrence is minor compared to the basic communicative function of asking for information. Such communicative functions appeared in only 12.24% of all instances labelled as questions. The corpus data implies that interrogative structure with its prototypical function of a question is mainly used to seek information. Furthermore, the analysis reveals that the complete interrogative structure of wh-questions cannot be to ask for confirmation and clarification, as all the instances with the complete interrogative structure were representatives of yes–no questions. Based on this conclusion it is evident that elliptical questions may appear with this communicative function, as their reconstructed form corresponds with the structure of yes–no questions. However, an introductory wh-element which is fragmentary in structure can be used to ask for clarification, but similarly as in wh-questions does not occur when asking for confirmation. Based on these findings it could be estimated that questions with the aim to ask

for confirmation and clarification are more restrictive in terms of structure than a question with its primary function to ask for information.

(37) A: *Hey! What are you up to tonight?*

B: *I'm actually quarantined.*

A: ***Wait what!?*** (Appendix 1, 180)

(38) A: *It never stops hurting, does it?*

B: ***What?***

A: *Giving someone the best of you and watching them choose someone else*  
(Appendix 1, 174)

(39) A: *I got the best Christmas present I've ever gotten this year*

B: ***What*** (Appendix 1, 173)

(40) A: *omg did you call me baby?*

B: *maybe*

A: *uhhh*

B: ***is that ok?*** (Appendix 1, 33)

As apparent from examples (37) and (38), the wh-elements can represent the communicative function of asking for clarification. However, their interpretation is highly dependent on context, as the structure of isolated wh-element remains the same in different communicative functions, for example asking for information. To compare, the example (39) consists of the same wh-element as the previous examples, but their communicative function is not to ask for clarification but simply ask for further information. The key point for determining the communicative function for wh-elements is the previous message to which the wh-element responds and from which it can be determined which communicative function the wh-word conveys. The example (40) shows a complete form of interrogative structure that asks for confirmation. Similarly, as in the preceding examples, this communicative function is context-dependent and therefore the whole interaction thread is needed to label the according to function correctly.

In social media discourse, instead of an interrogative structure with a clarification function, a question mark itself can stand, which in terms of meaning conveys the same communication purpose, because it gives the other participant of an interaction a signal that he needs to explain

or clarify his message. This may be the reason why the interrogative function in the form of clarification did not occur on a larger scale as the function of asking for information. It is not apparent why the function of seeking confirmation did not appear on a larger scale as for this function interrogative structure will be expected. The possible explanation may be that that when a speaker asks for information he is likely to receive a confirmation along with the requested information and therefore a separate structure to seek confirmation may not be needed as such meaning is conveyed via the answer of the other speaker.

**Table 7:** Communicative functions of question

Question	absolute	%
asking for information	129	87.76%
asking for confirmation	12	8.16%
asking for clarification	6	4.08%
Total	147	100.00%

#### 4.4.6 REQUEST

The communicative function of a request in interrogative structure was the second most numerous group in the corpus in terms of communicative function, but compared to the previous group, their occurrence was much less frequent as it appeared in only 14.50% of all instances, as Table 3 reveals. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that requests do not appear in elliptical or fragmentary structure, as all instances labelled as requests occurred in the complete form of an interrogative clause. The possible explanation could be that even if a request appears in an interrogative structure that is more polite than a bare imperative, its communicative purpose is still directive and therefore incomplete sentence forms may not be able to convey such meaning ambiguously enough. On the other hand, there were no structures identified as commands, possibly because their communicative purpose is more directive than requests. As stated in the theoretical part, the usage of modal verbs makes the utterance function as a request. Furthermore, the analysis showed that in social media discourse the modal verb *can* is mainly used, as it appeared in all instances with the function of a request.

It could be therefore estimated that users on social media prefer to use requests over commands as commands may be perceived as impolite and too direct, as Carter and McCarthy (2006, 539) state. Furthermore, the expected participants on social networks are on the same level in terms of status, therefore using commands may appear inadequate.

(41) A: *Hi Dave, it's Tom. Can you do a poster for our Music Nights* (Appendix 1, 43)

(42) A: *Hey*

*Can I get my socks back?* (Appendix 1, 44)

Examples (41) and (42) represent a polite way of requesting using an interrogative structure. To compare the politeness between interrogative clause with a directive meaning of a request and typical imperative clause, which could be reconstructed as “*Do a poster for our Music Nights*”, it is apparent that such structure is inappropriate for social media discourse and would probably appear for example in the work environment where the relationship of superiority is applied. Furthermore, both examples (41) and (42) show the usage of a modal verb *can* which is used to indicate the ability of the listener to do something which is requested by the speaker but more politely than using a typical imperative structure. As Carter and McCarthy suggest, modal *can* is perceived to be less direct modal and therefore are used to make the utterance polite (2006, 687) Their conclusion is supported by the corpus study, where requests consistently appeared with the modal *can* and were prevailed over commands with less politeness.

#### 4.4.6.1 OFFER AND SUGGESTION

A slightly less directive communicative function with the interrogative structure is an offer and suggestion. Although offers and suggestions were separated in the theoretical part, only one instance of suggestion appeared in the corpus, as opposed to 22 offers. Therefore, this subchapter focuses on these two communicative functions and their possible relation.

Offers were mainly used in the elliptical structures with 16 instances out of 22 instances (72.72%). In its complete form, offers were realised mainly by yes–no questions. On the other hand, offers with fragmentary structure did not occur in the corpus as their structure is too limited to convey the meaning of an offer. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that structures with the verb *want to* or its contracted form “*wanna*” with the omission of a subject and auxiliary verb was the most prominent, appearing in 81.82% of all instances with the function of an offer.

(43) A: *We are going out for a while with boys.....*

B: *Okay*

A: *Can I still come over maybe later?* (Appendix 1, 41)

(44) A: *Hi! Want to see something cool?*

B: *Sure* (Appendix 1, 157)

(45) A: *Wanna hang out* (F, offer)

B: *when* (Appendix 1, 159)

Example (43) represents an interrogative structure with the communicative function of a suggestion. The reason why this instance was classified as a suggestion is that speaker A suggests an action from speaker B. In other words, the utterance would be an offer if it was proposed by speaker B. The following two examples (44) and (45) represent an elliptical structure with the function of an offer. In example (38), the auxiliary verb *do* and subject *you* are omitted similarly as in example (45), where the lexical verb *want to* is contracted to *wanna* which is typically shortened in spoken language which influences social media discourse. In these types of questions, interaction is crucial. In example (44), the listener responds to the previous sentence by *sure* which implies that he accepts the offer and based on the answers, this type of question can be distinguished from yes–no questions.

Possible reasons behind using structures where two sentence elements are omitted may be that in a communicative function of an offer, the utterance is aimed at the other participant in the conversation and therefore the omission of a subject does not create ambiguities in interpretation. This conclusion can be supported by a definition of an offer by Carter and McCarthy who state: “Offers are speech acts in which the speaker volunteers to do something beneficial for the listener”. (2006, 699) In other words, an offer is something that the listener should benefit from, therefore when we use the lexical verb *want to*, we presuppose that we offer something that the person wants.

#### 4.4.7 STATEMENT

As stated in the theoretical part of the thesis, a function of a statement can be occasionally realised by interrogative structure. It was estimated that statements in the form of an interrogative clause will not be abundant in social media discourse as it is more natural to express statements in the declarative structure that is typically used for this communicative function. This estimate is supported with the corpus data, as statements with interrogative structure appeared in only 7.00% of all instances, as Table 3 reveals. The following examples show several examples from the corpus that function as statements:

(46) *Tweet: am I the only one that thinks Goodmorning and Goodnight texts can change your mood???? & actually make you feel important* (Appendix 1, 48)

(47) *Tweet: why are all hot & funny people (me) mentally ill???* (Appendix 1, 113)



(48) A: *Are you a campfire?*

B: *Why*

A: *Cuz I'd be spending the night in your warmth*

B: *Wow* (Appendix 1, 52)

As apparent from the example (46), the speaker of the utterance involves himself in the structure and indirectly states his position on the matter. Based on that, the utterance could be classified as a rhetorical question that does not expect an answer but rather conveys information. A similar communicative function is represented by example (47). The speaker of this utterance adds himself into the structure by brackets and corresponding pronoun *me* to indicate his presence in the utterance. Rather than obtain an explanation why are all hot and funny people mentally ill, he states that this statement is true for him. However, if the personal pronoun *me* was omitted, the interrogative structure would not be perceived as a statement, but rather as a question that seeks information. The example (48) demonstrates a statement formed by a metaphor. The communicative intention of speaker A in example (48) is not to state that speaker B is an actual campfire, but to convey his feelings figuratively based on the suffix *Cuz I'd be spending the night in your warmth*. It is therefore clear from all the examples that the context serves as an inseparable part in determining the communicative function.

The possible interpretation can be supported by Leech and Svartvik who state that rhetorical questions are like a strong negative statement and the negative rhetorical question is like a strong positive statement (2002, 120) All instances could be therefore reconstructed into a statement with declarative structure. However, the explanation by Leech and Svartvik indirectly implies that the statement is in fact emotionally oriented and therefore the relation between statement and exclamation is not distinct and subsequently, these communicative functions may be misinterpreted based on interpretation.

#### **4.4.8 EXCLAMATION**

The last category that will be analysed is the communicative function of an exclamation. The exclamative function has appeared in the minority of cases, consisting of only 5.00% of all instances, as Table 3 suggests. In order to classify an interrogative structure as an exclamation, the context and the whole of interaction must be taken into consideration. Eastwood states the main function of an exclamation is to express a feeling (1994, 15). As defined in the theoretical part of the thesis, interrogative structure with the exclamative function is most likely

emotionally oriented and may contain exclamation marks that suggest the exclamative purpose behind the structure.

(49) A: **do I have to tell you no?!?** *Leave me alone*

B: *I'm sorry I'm sorry*

*You should take it as a compliment*

*It's Valentine's Day!*

*That I think I know when I see someone I would like*

*I can stop I just think we could go on a date* (Appendix 1, 54)

(50) A: *i just can't believe you did this to me*

B: *i'm sorry i had no idea*

A: *it's called a betrayal of trust, **does that mean anything to you?*** (Appendix 1, 55)

(51) *I stay declining calls :-D ... **what y'all want!!!!!!** TEXT ME* (Appendix 1, 147)

Examples (49), (50), and (51) represent how exclamative function in the form of interrogative structure is dependent on the context in which it occurs. For instance, in example (49) the speaker A most likely expresses the feeling of frustration towards speaker B judging by the usage of multiple punctuation marks and the subsequent utterance '*Leave me alone*. However, the possible interpretation is limited by the fact that the whole thread of the interaction is not available. Similarly, example (50) could be classified as an exclamation based on the context. This instance could be also interpreted as an example of a statement, however, based on the context it seems that speaker B is unaware of his action and speaker A is expressing his negative feelings about the action to speaker B rather than simply state it as a fact. If the structure in example (50) appeared without the context, the communicative function could be misinterpreted, therefore the importance of context should not be overlooked. A slightly different situation is represented by example (46), where there is not an interaction present, but only a fragment of it. However, the excessive punctuation and the usage of capital letters indicate that the utterance is emotionally oriented. Structurally, exclamations occur in yes-no questions as an example (49) and (50) suggests, or by the structure of wh-question in complete or elliptical form, where auxiliary verb *to do* is absent, as an example (51) demonstrates.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The goal of this thesis was to map the occurrence and use of interrogative structures in social media discourse as well as examining the form and communicative functions of interrogative structures. The theoretical part comprises the first three chapters, which establish the stylistic and syntactic background for the analysis. The first chapter introduces the terms “electronic discourse” and “computer-mediated communication” and sets their relation to social media discourse. Furthermore, the discourse of social media is analysed with a focus on the characteristic language means, prototypical features of spoken language and its influence on communication in the discourse. The following chapters deal with the definition of the interrogative structure from a syntactic point of view and their communicative functions. In addition to full interrogative structures, the form of incomplete interrogative structures is also examined.

As the analysis shows, in all 200 occurrences of an interrogative structure, 120 of them (60%) appeared in the prototypical interrogative structure, 52 occurrences (26%) were formed by elliptical structure and 28 instances (14%) occurred with fragmentary structure. Although the results may suggest that the discourse of social media is not as informal as estimated, a more detailed analysis revealed that informal elements often appear in these structures, such as changes in capitalization, punctuation, or the use of abbreviated forms of pronouns. The analysis furthermore shows that users on social platforms need both specific information using wh-questions and also more general information in the form of yes–no questions. In terms of polarity, users on social networks prefer neutral interrogative structures. In the elliptical structure, which appeared in 26.00% of all occurrences, the auxiliary verb does not occur in most cases (51.92%). The next most common occurrence in this group was the elliptical structure with the omission of subject and auxiliary verb which represents greater ambiguity in possible interpretations, therefore the context and communicative function are necessary for the correct interpretation. The elliptical structure with the omission of a subject appeared in only 1 instance, therefore it could be concluded that if there is no subject in the elliptical structure, the auxiliary verb will most likely not be present as well. The last group in terms of the structure were minor questions that appeared in only 14.00% of all instances. The most common fragment that substitutes the typical interrogative structure was an isolated wh-element which appeared in 78.57% of instances with fragmentary structure.

The results of the second part of the analysis confirmed that the interrogative structure is most often used with its prototypical function of the question, as 147 cases out of 200 cases were classified under the communication function of the question (73.50%). Other communicative functions were represented only in a minority of cases; requests appeared in 29 instances (14.50%), statements in 14 instances (7.00%) and exclamations in 10 instances (5.00%). The communicative function of a question is most often used to seek information (87.76%), only in a minority of cases the question is used to seek confirmation or clarification (12.24%). In addition, the results support the conclusion in the theoretical part that question with its prototypical communication can be labelled as the most universal because it occurred not only in various types of questions in the complete interrogative structure but also in the elliptical and fragmentary structure. On the contrary, questions with the aim to ask for confirmation and clarification are more restrictive in terms of structure than a question with its primary function. The communicative function of a request in interrogative structure was the second most numerous group in the corpus in terms of communicative function, but compared to the previous group, their occurrence was much less frequent as it appeared in only 14.50% of all instances. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that in social media discourse, requests with the modal *can* are preferred over commands that are not suitable for communication on social media, as there was no instance of a command in the corpus. Another communicative function that can be realised by an interrogative structure is an offer that appeared in 11.00% of all instances. Offers were most often realised by the structure of yes–no questions or in elliptical structure, where the verb *want to* or its abbreviated version *wanna* is very often used as it signals that the speaker offers something beneficial to the listener even if the subject of the structure is absent. The last two communicative functions of statement and exclamation appeared in only 12.0% of all instances. Such results were expected because these communicative functions most often occur with their prototypical structure as their use in the interrogative structure represents a more complex structure, which is not desirable for communication in social media discourse.

## 6 RESUMÉ

Tato bakalářská práce zkoumá výskyt a využití tázacích struktur v diskurzu sociálních medií. Cílem práce je zejména analýza vybraných autentických interakcí v prostředí sociálních sítí s cílem zmapovat užití a formu tázacích struktur v závislosti na kontextu ve kterém se vyskytují. Dalším cílem je také rozbor z hlediska komunikativních funkcí, které mohou tázací struktury představovat. Pro tento účel byly vybrány tři sociální platformy, jmenovitě *Facebook* a *Facebook Messenger*, *Instagram* a *Twitter*.

Práce sestává ze dvou hlavních částí, a to části teoretické a praktické. Část teoretická obsahuje tři dílčí části, které představují syntaktický a stylistický podklad pro následnou analýzu. V první kapitole jsou představeny pojmy elektronický diskurz a obecná komunikace v prostředí internetu, takzvané CMC a jejich vztah k diskurzu sociálních médií. Dále je diskurz sociálních médií podrobněji rozebrán se zaměřením na charakteristické jazykové prostředky, prototypické rysy mluveného jazyka a jeho vliv na komunikace v daném diskurzu. Následující kapitola se zabývá vymezením tázací struktury ze syntaktického hlediska na základě rozdělení podle typologie otázek. Kromě kompletní tázacích struktur jsou také představeny takové tázací struktury, které se objevují v nekompletní formě; jde tedy o struktury eliptické a fragmentární. Poslední kapitola v teoretické části se zabývá komunikativními funkcemi tázací struktury; nejprve je podrobně popsána prototypická funkce tázací struktury otázka, které je dále členěna podle toho, jestli se ptá na informaci, nebo je využita pro potvrzení či objasnění. Dále jsou popsány i další komunikativní funkce, které můžou být vyjádřeny pomocí tázací struktury.

Praktickou část práce uvádí stručné vymezení cílů práce, metodologický postup a zdroje dat. Metodou výzkumu je korpusová studie, která se skládá ze 200 shromážděných případů tázacích struktur používaných při interakcích na sociálních médiích. Za tímto účelem byly vybrány tři sociální platformy, a to *Facebook*, *Facebook Messenger*, *Instagram* a *Twitter*, ze kterých je korpusová studie vytvořena. Všechna shromážděná data jsou přehledně seřazena v přílohách dle typu tázací struktury na tzv. majoritní otázky s prototypickou tázací strukturou, eliptické otázky s eliptickou strukturou a minoritní otázky s fragmentární strukturou. První skupina majoritních otázek, která je zároveň nejpočetnější skupinou z hlediska výskytů, je dále rozřazena podle typologie otázek a komunikativní funkce, kterou obsahuje. Výskyty s eliptickou strukturou jsou rozděleny podle chybějícího větného prvku, tedy podmětu, pomocného slovesa, lexikálního slovesa, nebo podle chybějícího podmětu spolu s pomocným slovesem. Minoritní otázky jsou rozděleny podle fragmentu, který ve větné struktuře nahrazuje

tázací strukturu a zároveň představují nejrozmanitější skupinu, jelikož fragmentární struktury nelze definovat tak jednoznačně jako struktury v předchozích skupinách. U každého výskytu je uvedena komunikativní funkce a zdroj. Samotnou analýzou předchází kapitola, která představuje vybrané sociální sítě, které byly použity jako zdroje samotného korpusu. Kapitola se zaměřuje na specifika každé platformy sociálních sítí v rámci komunikace v internetovém prostředí (CMC) založené na aspektech synchronní a asynchronní komunikace.

Samotná analýza je členěna na dvě základní skupiny; nejprve je analyzovaná tázací struktura ze syntaktického hlediska, a poté se analýza zaměřuje na komunikativní funkce, které se v tázací struktuře objevují. Z hlediska struktury byla nejčastější tzv. prototypická tázací struktura, která se objevila v 60 % všech výskytů. I když výsledky mohou naznačovat, že diskurz sociálních médií není tak neformální, jak bychom odhadovali, podrobnější analýza zjistila, že v těchto strukturách se často objevují prvky neformálního charakteru, jako jsou například změny v užívání velkých písmen, interpunkce, nebo používání zkrácených forem zájmen. Tyto stylistické prvky a možné důvody pro jejich použití jsou analyzovány v samostatné kapitole. Z hlediska typologie otázek se v prototypické tázací struktuře vyskytovaly v největším měřítku otázky zjišťovací a doplňovací, z čehož můžeme vyvozovat, že uživatelé na sociálních sítích potřebují jak specifickou informaci při použití otázky zjišťovací, tak také obecnou informaci při použití otázky doplňovací. Z hlediska polaritativy uživatelé na sociálních sítích preferují takové tázací struktury, které jsou neutrální. V eliptické struktuře, která se objevila v 26.00 % ze všech výskytů, se v nejvíce případech nevyskytuje pomocné sloveso (51.92 %). Dalším nejrozšířenějším výskytem v této skupině byla eliptická struktura, kde se nenachází podmět společně s pomocným slovesem, což představuje větší nejednoznačnost v možných interpretacích, proto je u těchto případů nutné brát v potaz kontext a komunikační funkci. Eliptická struktura, kde je vynechán pouze podmět, se vyskytovala pouze v jednom případě, můžeme tedy říct, že ve většině případů, kdy se v eliptické struktuře nenachází podmět, bude chybět i pomocné sloveso. Poslední skupinou z hlediska struktury byly tzv. minoritní otázky s fragmentární strukturou, která nahrazuje typickou tázací strukturu. Tento strukturální typ se objevil v 14.00 % případů. Mezi nejrozšířenější prvky v této struktuře patřil osamocené wh-element, který se objevil v 51.67 % případech. Mezi další fragmenty nahrazující tázací strukturu patřilo osamocené příslovečné určení a zkrácená textová forma, které se objevily v menším měřítku. V této skupině je také zařazena fragmentární struktura, u které nebylo možné s jistotou strukturu doplnit, a proto jsou v práci navržena dvě řešení, jak by kompletní struktura mohla vypadat.

Druhá část analýzy se zaměřuje na komunikativní funkce tázací struktur v diskurzu sociálních médií. Je důležité si uvědomit, že komunikační funkce jsou založeny na kontextu, a je proto možné, že některé příklady lze interpretovat odlišně. Takové případy se odrážejí v jednotlivých podkapitolách. Výsledky druhé části analýzy potvrdily, že tázací struktura nejčastěji odpovídá své prototypické funkci otázky, protože 147 případů ze 200 případů bylo klasifikováno pod komunikační funkcí otázky (73.50 %). Ostatní komunikativní funkce byly zastoupeny pouze v menšině případů; žádosti se objevily ve 29 případech (14.50 %), tvrzení ve 14 případech (7.00 %) a zvolání v 10 případech (5.00 %). Stejně jako u předchozí části byly tyto komunikativní funkce detailně rozebrány v jednotlivých kapitolách; otázky byly dále rozděleny na zjišťovací, potvrzovací a vyjasňující funkci a obdobně byly žádosti odděleny od nabídek a návrhů. Otázka se nejčastěji používá pro zjištění chybějící informace (87.76 %); pouze v minoritních případech se otázka vyskytovala ve funkci pro potvrzení nebo vyjasnění (12.24 %). Výsledky navíc podporují závěr v teoretické části, že otázku s její prototypovou komunikativní funkcí lze označit za univerzální, protože se vyskytla nejen u různých typů otázek v úplné tázací struktuře, ale také v eliptické a fragmentární struktuře. Naopak otázka ve funkci potvrzení a vyjasnění je z hlediska struktury značně omezenější; například struktura otázky zjišťovací nebo fragmentární struktury se pro tyto komunikativní funkce nedají použít. Komunikační funkce žádosti v tázací struktuře byla druhou nejpočetnější skupinou v korpusu, ale ve srovnání s předchozí skupinou byl jejich výskyt mnohem méně častý, protože se objevil pouze u 14.50% všech případů. Dále také analýza určila, že v diskurzu sociálních médií se nevyskytují příkazy, ale pouze žádosti s modálním slovesem *can*. Z tohoto můžeme předpokládat, že uživatelé na sociálních médiích používají pouze direktivní funkci žádosti, protože příkazy mohou být v daném diskurzu vnímány jako nezdvořilé a příliš přímé. Další komunikativní funkcí byla nabídka, která silně převažovala návrh, který se objevil pouze v 1 případě. Tato komunikativní funkce se nejčastěji objevovala v struktuře otázky doplňovací, nebo v eliptické struktuře, kde se velmi často užívá sloveso *want to* nebo jeho zkrácená verze *wanna*, která signalizuje, že mluvčí nabízí posluchačovi něco, o co posluchač stojí a z čeho by mohl mít prospěch. Poslední dvě komunikativní funkce tvrzení a zvolání se objevily pouze v 12.0 % všech případů. Tyto výsledky byly očekávatelné, protože tyto komunikativní funkce jsou nejčastěji představeny se svojí prototypickou strukturou a jejich použití v tázací struktuře představuje složitější strukturu, což pro komunikaci v daném diskurzu není žádoucí. U těchto komunikativních funkcí je klíčový kontext a celé vlákno interakce, bez nichž nemůžeme klasifikovat dané komunikativní funkce s jistotou. Dalším vodítkem pro funkci zvolání může být v diskurzu sociálních médiích užití velkých písmen nebo nadměrné interpunkce.

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## 8 APPENDICES

In the Appendices, all assembled instances of interrogative structures used in interactions between users on social media are listed and categorized according to their form, the first group is further subdivided according to communicative functions to ensure clarity of the corpus. Each corpus sample, the source and its communicative function are given. Moreover, each occurrence contains an abbreviation of its source; the letter F indicates the social platform *Facebook*, the letter I indicates the social platform *Instagram* and the letter T indicates the social platform *Twitter*. In Appendices 2 and 3, all references from which the corpus was compiled with their digital link and the date of access are listed.

### 8.1 APPENDIX 1

#### 8.1.1 MAJOR QUESTIONS

##### 8.1.1.1 YES – NO QUESTIONS

##### 8.1.1.1.1 COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION: ASKING FOR INFORMATION

1. A: ***Did you eat the leftovers I was saving in the fridge?*** (F, asking for information)  
B: *No I ate them in the living room*
2. A: ***Are you still married? :-D*** (F, asking for information)  
B: *I got married 2 weeks ago*  
A: *So it's pretty serious I guess. Congrats!*
3. A: ***hey do you have anxiety prime?*** (F, asking for information)  
B: *yeah why*  
A: *amazon\**  
B: *yeah I have that too*
4. A: ***are you ok?*** (F, asking for information)  
B: *I'm singing*  
A: *i thought you were crying*
5. A: *How was your day sweetie*  
B: *There was a fire today on campus I think*  
A: ***Omg!!! Did anyone get hurt?*** 😞 (F, asking for information)  
*Hope you and ash are okay <3*
6. A: ***Have your DMs turned blue?*** (I, asking for information)  
B: *Not that I've seen*  
A: *Cause it loos like this*  
*\*looks*
7. A: *I just ended a five years Relationship...*  
B: ***Omg are you okay?*** :( (F, asking for information)  
A: *Yeah I'm fine..*  
*It wasn't my relationship*
8. A: ***Would you ever wake me up to go hiking*** (F, asking for information)  
B: *No*  
A: *Okay phew*

9. A: *pretty good. just walking out of this damm cool movie.*  
 B: *Ooh which one?*  
 A: *Aquaman! **Have you seen it yet?*** (I, asking for information)  
 B: *Haha only the one on eutourage*  
 What did you like about this one?  
 A: *Its hilarious! you have to check it out!*  
 B: *Haha any chance you'll to for it a second time? I promise*  
 I'll make the experience better than the last time 😊  
 A: *Hahah let's give it a shot 😊*
10. A: *There was a fire today at the school*  
 B: ***Did you start it?*** (F, asking for information)
11. A: ***Are you up?*** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *...we haven't talked in like 3 weeks*  
 A: *I miss you*  
 And it's cold, I wish we could cuddle.  
 B: *Oh trust me, if I was there I would warm you right up...by setting you on fire.*  
 Goodnight
12. A: ***Are you going out tonight?*** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *Okay fine you convinced me*
13. ***Is it just me?** I hate when company is at my house for too long like go home :-D* (F, asking for information)
14. *Tweet: @LewisCapaldi **are you gonna release any slightly happier songs?*** (T, asking for information)  
*Subtweet: no*
15. *Tweet: It's a new day in America.*  
*Subtweet: Joe biden is not my president*  
*Subtweet: **Are you Trump supporter?*** (T, asking for information)  
*Subtweet: No I am from India*
16. A: ***Have u always had the tattoo*** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *I got it at 20*  
 So no I wasn't born with it
17. A: ***So do u have a bf?*** (I, asking for information)  
 B: *Yep*  
 A: *Can I take you out sometime?*  
 B: *I literally just said that I have a boyfriend*  
 A: *I told him he could take the day off 😊*
18. A: *Hows your day going !!!*  
 B: ***Did you go to jail yet?*** (F, asking for information)  
 A: *Haha yeah i just got out*
19. A: *Wanna make 3000?*  
 B: ***Does it involve pictures of my feet?** If so, yes I do.* (I, asking for information)
20. A: ***Are you alive*** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *Meh*  
 A: *Are you okay*  
 B: *No*  
 A: *Are you exercising?*  
 B: *Nope*
21. A: *Are you alive*

- B: *Meh*  
A: **Are you okay** (F, asking for information)  
B: *No*  
A: *Are you exercising?*  
B: *Nope*
22. A: *Are you alive*  
B: *Meh*  
A: *Are you okay*  
B: *No*  
A: **Are you exercising?** (F, asking for information)  
B: *Nope*
23. A: **are you texting him rn** (F, asking for information)  
*like currently*  
B: *yes*  
A: *dude he's smiling at his phone mad hard rn*  
B: *stop my heart*  
A: *i'm not kidding he's smiling so much*
24. A: *U into cars?*  
B: *Yes, it truly was a masterpiece of film*  
A: *No I mean like are you a car person* (F, asking for information)  
B: *Im a human*
25. A: *\*sends a photo\**  
**Do you like this knife?** (I, asking for information)  
B: *yea*
26. *Tweet: Do u ever have to pause your music to read a serious message :-D* (T, asking for information)

### 8.1.1.1.2 COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION: ASKING FOR CONFIRMATION AND CLARIFICATION

27. A: **do u still like me** (F, asking for confirmation)  
B: *Yes baby*  
*U just piss me off*
28. A: **can i confess something?** (F, asking for confirmation)  
B: *sure!*  
A: *your smile is the prettiest smile i have ever seen*  
B: *can I confess something as well?*  
A: *oh, sure :)*  
B: *this smile only exists when i'm with you...*
29. A: *can i confess something?*  
B: *sure!*  
A: *your smile is the prettiest smile i have ever seen*  
B: **can I confess something as well?** (F, asking for confirmation)  
A: *oh, sure :)*  
B: *this smile only exists when i'm with you...*
30. A: **Are you okay** (F, asking for confirmation)  
B: *facing 3 years prison time*  
*come visit me in county*  
A: *Good luck!*
31. A: **Do you miss me or something?** (F, asking for confirmation)  
B: *No*  
A: *Ok good. I don't either. Just wanted to make sure we still hated each other*

B: *Okk*

32. A: *omg did you call me baby?* (F, asking for confirmation)

B: *maybe*

A: *uhhh*

B: *is that ok?*

A: *yea it's cool, i liked it*

B: *cool*

A: *cool*

33. A: *omg did you call me baby?*

B: *maybe*

A: *uhhh*

B: *is that ok?* (F, asking for confirmation)

A: *yea it's cool, i liked it*

B: *cool*

A: *cool*

34. A: *Can I stay over*

B: *Did you mean to send this to someone else* (F, asking for clarification)

?

A: *Nope*

35. A: *Hey, I left the food at your door*

B: *There's a key under my mat, can you leave it in the fridge*

A: *Are you asking me to break into your home* (F, asking for clarification)

B: *It's safe*

A: *Your dog says otherwise*

### 8.1.1.1.3 COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION: REQUEST

36. A: *Hi Dave, it's Tom. Can you do a poster for our Music Nights?* (F, request)

B: *Yes mate. Send me the details.*

A: *Fri 05/05 – Michaela Wylde*

*Fri 26/05 – The Swinnertones*

*Fri 02/06 – 40s Groove*

*Sat 10/06 – Crimson Child*

B: *What time do they start?*

A: *Half 8, 9ish*

B: *All done mate*

A: *I love you Dave xx*

37. A: *Hey*

*Can I get my socks back?* (F, request)

B: *Nah*

A: *Why?*

B: *Bc they're mine now*

A: *I need them back*

B: *U can buy more*

38. A: *Can I stay over* (F, request)

B: *Did you mean to send this to someone else*

?

A: *Nope*

39. A: *Hey there. Can you send me some messages on here as well?* (I, request)

B: *Hi there.*

*Heading out for a walk about. Talk to you later.*

40. A: *Can you make me happy?* (F, request)

B: *I'll try*

A: *That makes me happy*

41. A: *Hey, I left the food at your door*  
B: *There's a key under my mat, **can you leave it in the fridge*** (F, request)  
A: *Are you asking me to break into your home*  
B: *It's safe*  
A: *Your dog says otherwise*

#### 8.1.1.1.4 COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION: OFFER

42. A: *Hey*  
B: ***Do you want to talk?*** (F, offer)  
B: *not particularly, why?*
43. A: *So do u have a bf?*  
B: *Yep*  
A: ***Can I take you out sometime?*** (I, offer)  
B: *I literally just said that I have a boyfriend*  
A: *I told him he could take the day off 😊*
44. A: *I'm about to go to Whole Foods. **Do you need anything?*** (F, offer)  
B: *LMFAO as a matter fact yes pls bring me some avocados*
45. A: ***Do you wanna come over Saturday?*** (F, offer)  
B: *I thought we broke up*  
A: *I'm not seeing any one I've been thinking a lot about you*
46. A: ***Can we be Facebook friends?*** (F, offer)  
B: *Why*  
A: *Because I would like that*  
B: *Well it's not about what you want.*  
A: *Why can't we be friends on Facebook*  
B: *Because we aren't friends.*

#### 8.1.1.1.5 COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION: SUGGESTION

47. A: *We are going out for a while with boys.....*  
B: *Okay*  
A: ***Can I still come over maybe later?*** (F, suggestion)

#### 8.1.1.1.6 COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION: STATEMENT

48. *Tweet: am I the only one that thinks Goodmorning and Goodnight texts can change your mood???? & actually make you feel important* (T, statement)
49. A: *Hey*  
B: *Hii*  
A: *Where you from*  
B: *Can't tell by the flag in my bio?*  
A: *Puerto Rico? :-D*  
B: ***DO I LOOK PUERTO RICAN TO YOU*** (F, statement)
50. A: *I think according to the horoscope libra and taurus are pretty opposite haha*  
B: ***Are you trying to tell me something?*** Lol (F, statement)  
A: *No haha*  
A: *I'm just reading this horoscope*  
A: *It's says my matches are Gemini, Aquarius, Leo*
51. A: *Good morning baby*  
A: *I love you so much my sweetheart*  
B: ***Do you live in a dream world*** (F, statement)

52. A: **Are you a campfire?** (I, statement based on metaphor)  
B: *Why*  
A: *Cuz I'd be spending the night in your warmth*  
B: *Wow*

53. A: **Are you a keyboard?** (I, statement based on metaphor)  
B: *Probably*  
A: *Because you seem to be my type*  
B: *Hahahaha*  
*Woah*  
*Wow*

### 8.1.1.1.7 COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION: EXCLAMATION

54. A: **do I have to tell you no?!?** *Leave me alone* (I, exclamation)  
B: *I'm sorry I'm sorry*  
*You should take it as a compliment*  
*It's Valentine's Day!*  
*That I think I know when I see someone I would like*  
*I can stop I just think we could go on a date*

55. A: *i just can't believe you did this to me*  
B: *i'm sorry i had no idea*  
A: *it's called a betrayal of trust, does that mean anything to you?* (F, exclamation)  
B: *of course it does, i didn't mean to hurt you*  
A: *you can't just get me a gift out of nowhere and i have nothing prepared for you now i look like a big old jerk*

56. A: *hey beautiful*  
B: **omg am i dreaming?** (I, exclamation)  
*i'm a huge fan hello*  
A: *how are you darling?*  
B: *i'm amazing now how are you?*  
A: *i'm good thanks for asking*  
B: *soooo what are you up to*  
A: *just talking to one of the most prettiest girls i've ever seen on my Instagram feed*  
B: *oh that's good I guess*

### 8.1.1.2 WH-QUESTIONS

#### 8.1.1.2.1 COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION: ASKING FOR INFORMATION

57. A: **What are you up to?** (F, asking for information)  
B: *Just chilling.*

58. A: **How are you?** (F, asking for information)  
B: *Good I'm in a relationship now*  
A: *Cool from online?*  
*Didn't take long lol*  
*Humor me*  
*He a bad boy?*  
B: *It weird you want to know so I'm going to block you*

59. A: **What are you doing?** (F, asking for information)  
*Lmao*  
B: *Talking with a friend*  
A: *Who?*  
B: *Just a friend*  
A: *OK lol*  
B: *Yeah*

60. A: *Happy birthday!*  
 B: *Thank you*  
 A: ***So how's everything?*** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *U don't have to do this, we can end the end the convo here*  
 A: *Lmao thank God. Talk to u on your next birthday*
61. A: *Btw*  
*Whos dat dude with the hat*  
 B: *U know him*  
*My friend from Denver*  
*Why*  
 A: ***Why was he there*** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *Dk*  
*He said he'd move here too*  
 A: *Ok.*  
 B: *Babe*  
*What's wrong*  
 ?  
 A: *Nothing*  
 B: *Stop this bullsh\*t rn*  
*There's not a one person I'd rather look at in this life*  
*U know your mine*  
*And I know your mine so what's the problem*  
 B: *U know*
62. *Tweet: What was the last thing you both said to each other?* (T, asking for information)
63. A: ***why did you leave wrestle mania on for the cats*** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *They need to learn to protect us*
64. A: ***Who told you that*** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *I literally know everything like no one has to tell me*
65. A: ***How was your day sweetie*** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *There was a fire today on campus I think*  
 A: *Omg!!! Did anyone get hurt?* 😞  
*Hope you and ash are okay <3*
66. A: *Hey Alicia, noticed something fascinating in one of your pictures...*  
 B: *Ok...what is it* (I, asking for information)  
 A: *You smile exactly like my future toxic girlfriend*  
*and it definitely brightens my day*
67. A: ***Hey how are you?*** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *Good enough that I don't feel the need to text my ex's at 3am. You alright?*
68. *Tweet: How do men find pillows that flat? I have never seen flat lifeless pillows being sold and yet men always own them* (T, asking for information)
69. *Tweet: Why do family members give u less money when u get older? That's when u need it the most* (T, asking for information)
70. A: ***where have you been*** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *asleep*  
 A: *for two days?*  
 B: *ya*
71. A: *Hi Dave, it's Tom. Can you do a poster for our Music Nights?*  
 B: *Yes mate. Send me the details.*  
 A: *Fri 05/05 – Michaela Wylde*  
*Fri 26/05 – The Swinnertones*



- Fri 02/06 – 40s Groove  
 Sat 10/06 – Crimson Child  
 B: **What time do they start?** (F, asking for information)  
 A: Half 8, 9ish  
 B: All done mate  
 A: I love you Dave xx
72. *Tweet: which auto response should i send back to my dentist?* (T, asking for information)
73. A: *Pretty good. just walking out of this damm cool movie.*  
 B: *Ooh which one?*  
 A: *Aquaman! Have you seen it yet?*  
 B: *Haha only the one on eutourage*  
**What did you like about this one?** (I, asking for information)  
 A: *Its hilarious! you have to check it out!*  
 B: *Haha any chance you'll to for it a second time? I promise I'll make the experience better than the last time 😊*  
 A: *Hahah let's give it a shot 😊*
74. A: **where are you?** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *oh i'm here*  
    *i've been watching the football game with your dad for an hour*  
 A: *what the hell*  
    *come up then*  
 B: *ok*  
 A: *i said come*  
 B: *just 3 more minutes*  
 A: *what the hell tom you're dating me not my dad*
75. A: *Hey*  
 B: *Hey*  
 A: *How ya Doing*  
 B: *Doing well! How are you?* (F, asking for information)  
 A: *I'm good. Up kinda late*  
 B: *Yeah you are haha*  
 A: *So are you lol*  
 B: *I just woke up haha*
76. **Why did you and your ex break up?** *Don't skip I wanna read ya stories* (F, asking for information)
77. *Tweet: What are some good first date questions?* (T, asking for information)  
*Subtweet: "is there someone in your life who might be hurt by the fact that you're out on a date right now?"*
78. A: **how was your date?** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *I blocked his number while we were at the dinner*  
 A: *LMAOOOO*
79. A: **When am I gunna see you?** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *When I post a picture on Instagram.*
80. A: *guess what*  
 B: *What*  
 A: *no you have to guess*  
 B: *I don't know??*  
 A: *grandma in the hospital*  
 B: *Why would you make me guess that?*  
**What happened??** (F, asking for information)

81. A: *Any chance you wanna grab drinks next week?*  
 ...  
 A: *Hey! **What are you up to tonight?*** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *I'm actually quarantined.*  
 A: *Wait what!?*
82. A: *Hey, you still have that MacBook pro??*  
 B: *Yes*  
 A: *What's the lowest you'll take?*  
 B: *Lowest I'll go is \$750*  
 ...  
 A: ***Ok, where do you want to meet*** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *101 main in Burlington be there in 10 minutes?*
83. A: *Quick question?*  
 B: *Make it quick*  
 A: *Lol When we getting coffee?*  
 B: *Shut up. We're not getting coffee*  
 A: *Hahaha. **What are we getting then?*** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *A restraining order*
84. A: *Where u from?*  
 B: *CA*  
 A: *Where's CA?*  
 B: ***Where are you?*** (I, asking for information)  
 A: *California*  
     *Where's CA?*  
 B: *In the USA.*  
 A: *Okay*
85. A: *I need music*  
 B: ***hey how do you spell your name?*** (F, asking for information)  
 A: *Matt?*  
 B: *oh just making sure*  
 A: *why*  
 B: *I thought I spelled it wrong*  
 A: *nah u got it*
86. A: *do I have to tell you no?!? Leave me alone*  
 B: *I'm sorry I'm sorry*  
     *You should take it as a compliment*  
     *It's Valentine's Day*  
     *That I think I know when I see someone I would like*  
     *I can stop I just think we could go on date*  
 A: *No*  
 B: *Fine*  
     *It's not fine but I'll act like it is*  
     ***What are you looking for in a guy*** (I, asking for information)
87. A: ***where are you*** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *I left early*  
     *Sorry I couldn't stay longer* 😞  
 A: *wtf where are you going*  
 B: *I'm going home*  
 A: *are you kidding me come back*  
     *you're drunk*  
 B: *don't worry i called an uber*  
 A: *we drank at your place*  
 B: *Oh*  
     *Where am i going*

- A: *wow seriously?*  
*get the driver on the phone*
88. A: *where are you*  
 B: *I left early*  
*Sorry I couldn't stay longer 😞*  
 A: **wtf where are you going** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *I'm going home*  
 A: *are you kidding me come back*  
*you're drunk*  
 B: *don't worry i called an uber*  
 A: *we drank at your place*  
 B: *Oh*  
*Where am i going*  
 A: *wow seriously?*  
*get the driver on the phone*
89. *How did your mom find out you smoked weed?* (F, asking for information)
90. *Tweet: what is the psychology behind people that put themselves as their phone background?* (T, asking for information)
91. A: **Why are you so mean?** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *Because the best way not to get your heart broken is to pretend you don't have one*
92. A: *Hey*  
 B: *What's up*  
 A: *I never asked.. how old are u?* (F, asking for information?)  
 B: *27*  
 A: *Ok cool. U got kids?*  
 B: *No*
93. A: **what's wrong** (F, asking for information)  
 B: **EVERYONE KNOWS THAT IF U SEND THE LAST TEXT AT NIGHT, THE OTHER PERSON IS SUPPOSE TO START THE CONVO THE NEXT DAY. THAT'S HOW IT WORKS. DAMN.**
94. A: **Hows your day going !!!** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *Did you go to jail jet?*  
 A: *Haha yeah i just got out*
95. A: *Btw*  
*Whos dat dude with the hat*  
 B: *U know him*  
*My friend from Denver*  
*Why*  
 A: *Why was he there*  
 B: *Dk*  
*He said he'd move here too*  
 A: *Ok.*  
 B: *Babe*  
**What's wrong** (F, asking for information)  
 ?  
 A: *Nothing*  
 B: *Stop this bullsh\*t rn*  
*There's not a one person I'd rather look at in this life*  
*U know your mine*  
*And I know your mine so what's the problem*  
 B: *U know*
96. A: *wyd*

B: nothing **what's up** (F, asking for information)  
A: come spend the night with me

97. A: ?

B: What

A: **What's your deal** (I, asking for information)

B: You told me to do you a favor and delete your number so I did. I thought we were done here

A: I thought you at least would talk to me

B: Nah

98. A: Btw

*Whos dat dude with the hat*

B: U know him

*My friend from Denver*

*Why*

A: Why was he there

B: Dk

*He said he'd move here too*

A: Ok.

B: Babe

**What's wrong** (F, asking for information)

?

A: Nothing

B: Stop this bullsh\*t rn

*There's not a one person I'd rather look at in this life*

*U know your mine*

*And I know your mine so what's the problem*

B: U know

99. Tweet: **what's the most dangerous game to play?** (T, asking for information)

Subtweet: "Imma just wake up early and do it then"

100. A: Hey

B: **What's up** (F, asking for information)

A: I never asked.. how old are u?

B: 27

A: Ok cool. U got kids?

B: No

101.A: Btw

**Whos dat dude with the hat** (F, asking for information)

B: U know him

*My friend from Denver*

*Why*

A: Why was he there

B: Dk

*He said he'd move here too*

A: Ok.

B: Babe

**What's wrong**

?

A: Nothing

B: Stop this bullsh\*t rn

*There's not a one person I'd rather look at in this life*

*U know your mine*

*And I know your mine so what's the problem*

B: U know

102. Tweet: **What's a good age to have kids?** (T, asking for information)

Subtweet: Financially stable years old

103. A: **Hey how's everything?** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *Hard pass*  
 A: *What? I mean I get the idiom but not understanding the context in reference to the question.*
104. A: *Weirdo*  
 B: **Why'd you like my pic from 2017** (I, asking for information)  
 B: *I'm not weird*  
 A: *You just haven't looked good in awhile*
105. Tweet: *What's the most beautiful amazing place you have ever been?* (T, asking for information)
106. A: *Where u from?*  
 B: *CA*  
 A: **Where's CA?** (I, asking for information)  
 B: *Where are you?*  
 A: *California*  
 B: *Where's CA?*  
 B: *In the USA.*  
 A: *Okay*
107. A: *Hey, you still have that MacBook pro??*  
 B: *Yes*  
 A: **What's the lowest you'll take?** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *Lowest I'll go is \$750*  
 ...  
 A: *Ok, where do you want to meet*  
 B: *101 main in Burlington be there in 10 minutes?*
108. A: *hey beautiful*  
 B: *omg am i dreaming?*  
 A: *i'm a huge fan hello*  
 A: **how are you darling?** (I, asking for information)  
 B: *i'm amazing now how are you?*  
 A: *i'm good thanks for asking*  
 B: *soooo what are you up to*  
 A: *just talking to one of the most prettiest girls i've ever seen on my Instagram feed*  
 B: *oh that's good I guess*
109. A: *hey beautiful*  
 B: *omg am i dreaming?*  
 A: *i'm a huge fan hello*  
 A: *how are you darling?*  
 B: *i'm amazing now **how are you?*** (F, asking for information)  
 A: *i'm good thanks for asking*  
 B: *soooo what are you up to*  
 A: *just talking to one of the most prettiest girls i've ever seen on my Instagram feed*  
 B: *oh that's good I guess*
110. A: *hey beautiful*  
 B: *omg am i dreaming?*  
 A: *i'm a huge fan hello*  
 A: *how are you darling?*  
 B: *i'm amazing now how are you?*  
 A: *i'm good thanks for asking*  
 B: **soooo what are you up to** (F, asking for information)  
 A: *just talking to one of the most prettiest girls i've ever seen on my Instagram feed*  
 B: *oh that's good I guess*

### 8.1.1.2.2 COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION: STATEMENT

111. Tweet: **Where will I spend my vacation this summer? In Banát! True Czech hidden gem... in Romania.**  
*We made a video about it last week. Here's a short article about it on our blog* (T, statement)
112. **Why I am still this small?** *This bet not be my grown lady body* (F, statement)
113. Tweet: *why are all hot & funny people (me) mentally ill???* (F, statement)
114. Tweet: **"Why did the Swing States stop counting in the middle of the night?"** @MariaBartirromo  
*Because they waited to find out how many ballots they had to produce in order to steal the Rigged Election. They were so far behind that they needed time, & a fake "water main break", to recover!* (T, statement)

### 8.1.1.2.3 COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION: EXCLAMATION

- 115.A: *where are you*  
B: *I left early*  
*Sorry I couldn't stay longer* 😞  
A: *wtf where are you going*  
B: *I'm going home*  
A: *are you kidding me come back*  
*you're drunk*  
B: *don't worry i called an uber*  
A: *we drank at your place*  
B: *Oh*  
**Where am i going** (F, exclamation)  
A: *wow seriously?*  
*get the driver on the phone*
- 116.A: *U awake?*  
B: **Yes. Why on Earth are you messaging me at 4am** (F, exclamation)  
A: *U just pop in to my head at random times :-D*  
B: *That's funny, I hardly ever think about you.*  
A: *Oh cheers lol*
- 117.A: *guess what*  
B: *What*  
A: *no you have to guess*  
B: *I don't know??*  
A: *grandma in the hospital*  
B: **Why would you make me guess that?** (F, exclamation)  
*What happened??*

### 8.1.1.3 NEGATIVE WH-QUESTION

- 118.A: *Can we be Facebook friends?*  
B: *Why*  
A: *Because I would like that*  
B: *Well it's not about what you want.*  
A: **Why can't we be friends on Facebook** (F, asking for information)  
B: *Because we aren't friends.*

### 8.1.1.4 ALTERNATIVE QUESTIONS

- 119.A: **Can you workout 7am M W or F?** (F, asking for information)  
B: *LOL*  
*No*

### 8.1.1.5 QUESTION TAGS

- 120.A: **It never stops hurting, does it?** (F, asking for confirmation)  
B: *What?*

A: *Giving someone the best of you and watching them choose someone else.*

## 8.1.2 ELLIPTICAL QUESTIONS

### 8.1.2.1 ABSENCE OF A SUBJECT IN AN INTERROGATIVE STRUCTURE

121.A: *Hey*

B: *Hii*

A: *Where you from*

B: ***Can't tell by the flag in my bio?*** (F, statement)

A: *Puerto Rico? :-D*

B: ***DO I LOOK PUERTO RICAN TO YOU***

### 8.1.2.2 ABSENCE OF A LEXICAL VERB *TO BE* IN AN INTERROGATIVE STRUCTURE

122.A: *What U Doin*

B: *Same phone I've always had. **Who dis?*** (F, asking for information)

123.A: ***U awake?*** (F, asking for information)

B: *Yes. Why on Earth are you messaging me at 4am*

A: *U just pop in to my head at random times :-D*

B: *That's funny, I hardly ever think about you.*

A: *Oh cheers lol*

124.A: ***U single?*** (I, asking for information)

B: *Not really I'm kinda talking to someone*

A: *Damm what y'all talking bout*

125.A: *How are you?*

B: *Good I'm in a relationship now*

A: *Cool from online?*

*Didn't take long lol*

*Humor me*

***He a bad boy?*** (F, asking for information)

B: *It weird you want to know so I'm going to block you*

126.A: ***U into cars?*** (F, asking for information)

B: *Yes, it truly was a masterpiece of film*

A: *No I mean like are you a car person*

B: *Im a human*

127.A: *Hey how are you?*

B: *Good enough that I don't feel the need to text my ex's at 3am. **You alright?*** (F, asking for confirmation)

128.A: ***U ok?*** (F, asking for confirmation)

*I'm worried dude*

B: *I'm fine*

*I found a new love*

129.A: *Hey! **Where u from?*** (F, asking for information)

B: *Hey my bad.. You're cute and all but I didn't mean to swipe on ya. I was just trying to get a crumb off my phone..*

130.A: ***Where u from?*** (I, asking for information)

B: *CA*

A: *Where's CA*

B: *Where are you?*

A: *California*

*Where's CA,*

B: *In the USA.*

A: *Okay*

131.A: *Hey*

B: *Hii*

A: **Where you from** (F, asking for information)

B: *Can't tell by the flag in my bio?*

A: *Puerto Rico? :-D*

B: *DO I LOOK PUERTO RICAN TO YOU*

### 8.1.2.3 ABSENCE OF AN AUXILIARY VERB *TO BE* IN AN INTERROGATIVE STRUCTURE

132.A: *So for some odd reason you kept on popping up in my head. What kind of witchcraft you doing over there* (F, statement)

B: *No witchcraft, but can't blame ya*

133.A: *You still hate me*

B: **You still messaging people you slept with once, four years ago?** (I, asking for confirmation)

134.A: *Hey*

B: *Hey*

A: **How ya Doing** (F, asking for information)

B: *Doing well! How are you?*

A: *I'm good. Up kinda late*

B: *Yeah you are haha*

A: *So are you lol*

B: *I just woke up haha*

135.A: *Hey there*

*Hey*

**You doing anything?** (F, asking for information)

*You wanna come by*

B: *bud, take me off of your roster it's been well over a year obviously*

*I'm not interested lmao*

A: *Ok fair enough*

136.A: **What U Doin** (F, asking for information)

B: *Same phone I've always had. Who dis?*

137.A: *U know what type of concert only costs 45 cents?*

B: *What?*

*There's no such thing*

A: *Yea its only 45 cents*

B: *Wtf u talking about Dave*

A: *Its 50 cent featuring Nickelback :-D :-D :-D*

B: *I'm so over this sh\*t*

*It's enough*

A: *Wait*

*Seriously*

B: *U have a problem fr*

A: *I really do have a problem*

*I have to organize a party in a little space for Milo*

*But dont know how to do it*

A: *Huh?*

**What u saying man???** (F, asking for clarification)

B: *I guess I just have to planet :-D :-D*

138.A: *Quick question?*

B: *Make it quick*

A: **Lol When we getting coffee?** (F, offer)



*B: Shut up. We're not getting coffee*  
*A: Hahahaha. What are we getting then?*  
*B: A restraining order*

139.A: ***U eating healthy?*** (F, asking for information)  
*B: Yes! Today I made whole wheat crumble covered poultry pieces boiled in organic olive juice*  
*A: Woahhh let me see*

#### 8.1.2.4 ABSENCE OF AN AUXILIARY VERB *TO DO* IN AN INTERROGATIVE STRUCTURE

140.Tweet: ***Y'all turn the shower on before or after you get in ??*** (T, asking for information)  
*Subtweet: Getting in the shower before you turn it on is psychotic*

141.A: ***You still hate me*** (I, asking for confirmation)  
*B: You still messaging people you slept with once, four years ago?*

142.A: *Hey there*  
*Hey*  
*You doing anything?*  
***You wanna come by*** (F, offer)  
*B: bud, take me off of your roster it's been well over a year obviously I'm not interested lmao*  
*A: Ok fair enough*

143.Tweet: ***You know what hurts the most?*** *Giving someone the best of you and watching them choosing someone else over you* (T, exclamation)

144.A: ***U know what type of concert only costs 45 cents?*** (F, asking for information)  
*B: What?*  
*There's no such thing*  
*A: Yea its only 45 cents*  
*B: Wtf u talking about Dave*  
*A: Its 50 cent featuring Nickelback :-D :-D :-D*  
*B: I'm so over this sh\*t*  
*It's enough*  
*A: Wait*  
*Seriously*  
*B: U have a problem fr*  
*A: I really do have a problem*  
*I have to organize a party in a little space for Milo*  
*But dont know how to do it*  
*A: Huh?*  
*What u saying man???*  
*B: I guess I just have to planet :-D :-D*

145.A: ***You heard about that platform called Virve that brings concerts to your screen?*** (F, asking for information)  
*B: Just looked, put my name down, looks pretty cool like*

146.A: ***You want to work out?*** (I, offer)  
*B: In your eyes*  
*I can*  
*A: We can burn two calories per minute in a kiss*  
*B: Haha wooowww*

147.Tweet: *I stay declining calls :-D ... what y'all want!!!!!! TEXT ME* (T, exclamation)

148.A: ***Any chance you wanna grab drinks next week?*** (F, offer)  
...  
*A: Hey! What are you up to tonight?*

B: I'm actually quarantined.  
A: Wait what!?

149. Tweet: "ur so quiet in person" **LMAO what u want me to do...freestyle?** (T, exclamation)

150. why u text me 1 time a day like i'm a vitamin (F, statement)

151. **Y'all still ask each other out??** After a month yk wtf going on b\*itxh donct act dumb :-D (F, asking for information)

152. A: **Hey, you still have that MacBook pro??** (F, asking for information)

B: Yes

A: What's the lowest you'll take?

B: Lowest I'll go is \$750

...

A: Ok, where do you want to meet

B: 101 main in Burlington be there in 10 minutes

153. A: **It's Over**

B: Why??

A: I found someone better than you

B: **You mean Linda??** (F, asking for information)

A: Wait!!... You know her?

B: Yeah... That's my fake account

154. A: **It's Over**

B: Why??

A: I found someone better than you

B: You mean Linda??

A: Wait!!... **You know her?** (F, asking for information)

B: Yeah... That's my fake account

### 8.1.2.5 ABSENCE OF AN AUXILIARY VERB *TO HAVE* IN AN INTERROGATIVE STRUCTURE

155. Tweet: *anyone got any revision tips?* (T, asking for information)

156. Tweet: *You ever loved somebody so much that you try understand them even when they hurt you?* (T, exclamation)

157. A: *Hey*

B: *What's up*

A: *I never asked.. how old are u?*

B: *27*

A: *Ok cool. U got kids?* (F, asking for information)

B: *No*

158. Tweet: ***You ever lost all respect for someone?*** Like damn really that's who you really are... I'm good to be safe (T, asking for information)

### 8.1.2.6 ABSENCE OF A SUBJECT AND AUXILIARY VERB IN AN INTERROGATIVE STRUCTURE

159. A: ***Hi! Want to see something cool?*** (I, offer)

B: *Sure*

160. A: ***Hey wanna add me as a friend on Facebook*** (F, offer)

B: *Hey no I'm ok*

A: *Hey*

Ok  
Fine

161.A: **Wanna hang out** (F, offer)

B: *when*

A: *Now*

B: *no*

162.A: **Want to grab dinner tonight?** (F, offer)

B: *Not really*

A: *I hate me too*

163.Tweet: **Want free Netflix subscription for 6 months?** Call 8866288662 and get Username and Password? (T, offer)

Subtweet: *This is absolutely fake. If you want free Netflix please use someone else's account like the rest of us.*

164.A: **Wanna be friends?** (F, offer)

B: *No lmao*

*Get a life*

165.A: **Wanna go to the gym with me?** (F, offer)

B: *Yeah I'll go to the restaurant with you*

A: *I said gym*

B: *Restaurant*

166.A: **Wanna come over or** (F, offer)

B: *Maybe*

A: *If u don't find anything better?*

B: *Exactly*

A: *Perfect*

167.A: **Wanna make 3000?** (I, offer)

B: *Does it involve pictures of my feet? If so, yes I do.*

168.A: **I HATE YOU**

*sorry my cat stepped on my keyboard*

B: *that's fine*

A: **wanna know a secret** (F, offer)

B: *of course*

A: *i don't have a cat*

169.A: **Wanna hear a joke??** (F, offer)

B: *sure go ahead.*

A: *The way you treat me...*

170.A: **hey wanna know something?** (F, offer)

B: *what?*

A: *loving you is the second best thing I ever did <3 <3*

B: *only second??okay 😞*

A: *finding you is the first*

171.A: *Okay, then. We're done. Don't text me again.*

B: **Want something to eat?** (F, offer)

A: *From where?*

172.A: **Start to miss me yet lol?** (F, asking for information)

B: *No that's friends I didn't text u lmao*

A: *Damn. My bad*

### 8.1.3 MINOR QUESTIONS

#### 8.1.3.1 FRAGMENTARY STRUCTURE – ISOLATED WH-ELEMENT

##### 8.1.3.1.1 WH-ELEMENT WHAT

173.A: *I got the best Christmas present I've ever gotten this year*

B: **What** (F, asking for information)

A: *You not being in my life anymore*

174.A: *It never stops hurting, does it?*

B: **What?** (F, asking for clarification)

A: *Giving someone the best of you and watching them choose someone else*

175.A: ?

B: **What** (I, asking for information)

A: *What's your deal*

B: *You told me to do you a favor and delete your number so I did.*

*I thought we were done here*

A: *I thought you at least would talk to me*

B: *Nah*

176.A: *There's one thing I'll never allow you to do*

B: **What** (F, asking for information)

A: *It's okay if you have a boyfriend*

B: *I don't lmaooo*

177.A: *hey wanna know something?*

B: **what?** (F, asking for information)

A: *loving you is the second best thing I ever did <3 <3*

B: *only second??okay 😞*

A: *finding you is the first*

178.A: **guess what** (F, statement)

B: *What*

A: *no you have to guess*

B: *I don't know??A: grandma in the hospital*

B: *Why would you make me guess that?*

*What happened??*

179.A: *guess what*

B: **What** (F, asking for information)

A: *no you have to guess*

B: *I don't know??*

A: *grandma in the hospital*

B: *Why would you make me guess that?*

*What happened??*

180.A: *Any chance you wanna grab drinks next week?*

...

A: *Hey! What are you up to tonight?*

B: *I'm actually quarantined.*

A: **Wait what!?** (F, asking for clarification)

##### 8.1.3.1.2 WH-ELEMENT WHY

181.A: *Hey*

*Do you want to talk?*

B: *not particularly. why?* (F, asking for information)

182.A: *hey thinkn of u*

B: **Why** (F, asking for information)

- 183.A: *Hey*  
*Can I get my socks back?*  
 B: *Nah*  
 A: **Why?** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *Bc they're mine now*  
 A: *I need them back*  
 B: *U can buy more*
- 184.A: *Can we be Facebook friends?*  
 B: **Why** (F, asking for information)  
 A: *Because I would like that*  
 B: *Well it's not about what you want.*  
 A: *Why can't we be friends on Facebook*  
 B: *Because we aren't friends.*
- 185.A: *Are you a campfire?*  
 B: **Why** (I, asking for clarification)  
 A: *Cuz I'd be spending the night in your warmth*  
 B: *Wow*
- 186.A: *I need music*  
 B: *hey how do you spell your name?*  
 A: *Matt?*  
 B: *oh just making sure*  
 A: **why** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *I thought I spelled it wrong*  
 A: *nah u got it*
- 187.A: *I just wanted to let you know ...i-i really like you*  
 B: *ok, wait, hold on a second*  
 A: **why?** (F, asking for information)  
 B: *i'm texting my best friend for her to tell me what to say*
- 188.A: *Btw*  
*Whos dat dude with the hat*  
 B: *U know him*  
*My friend from Denver*  
**Why** (F, asking for information)  
 A: *Why was he there*  
 B: *Dk*  
*He said he'd move here too*  
 A: *Ok.*  
 B: *Babe*  
*What's wrong*  
 ?  
 A: *Nothing*  
 B: *Stop this bullsh\*t rn*  
*There's not a one person I'd rather look at in this life*  
*U know your mine*  
*And I know your mine so what's the problem*  
 B: *U know*
- 189.A: *hey do you have anxiety prime?*  
 B: **yeah why** (F, asking for information)  
 A: *amazon\**  
 B: *yeah I have that too*
- 190.A: *I'm breaking up with you.*  
 B: *Huh, why?* (F, asking for information)  
 A: *You're not getting a proper day job, all you do is stare at charts, trading scams*

191.A: *It's Over*  
B: **Why??** (F, asking for information)  
A: *I found someone better than you*  
B: *You mean Linda??*  
A: *Wait!!.....You know her?*  
B: *Yeah...That's my fake account*

#### 8.1.3.1.3 OTHER WH-ELEMENTS

192.A: *pretty good. just walking out of this damm cool movie.*  
B: **Ooh which one?** (I, asking for information)  
A: *Aquaman! Have you seen it yet?*  
B: *Haha only the one on eutourage*  
*What did you like about this one?*  
A: *Its hilarious! you have to check it out!*  
B: *Haha any chance you'll to for it a second time?*  
*I promise I'll make the experience better than the last time 😊*  
A: *Hahah let's give it a shot 😊*

193.A: *Okay, then. We're done. Don't text me again.*  
B: *Want something to eat?*  
A: **From where?** (F, asking for information)

194.A: *Wanna hang out*  
B: **when** (F, asking for information)  
A: *Now*  
B: *no*

#### 8.1.3.1.4 COMBINATION OF WH-ELEMENTS

195.A: *You*  
*Im taking you somewhere when i get home*  
B: **Where and why?** (F, asking for information)  
A: *The city and because i want to I haven't been in a while*

#### 8.1.3.2 FRAGMENTARY STRUCTURE – ISOLATED ADVERBIAL

196.A: *where have you been*  
B: *asleep*  
A: **for two days?** (F, asking for information)  
B: *ya*

#### 8.1.3.3 FRAGMENTARY STRUCTURE – ABBREVIATION

197.A: **wyd?** (F, asking for information)  
B: *nothing what's up*  
A: *come spend the night with me*

198.A: **wyd** (I, asking for information)  
B: *you trynna do something if ur still in Toronto?*  
A *Yeah wyd tonight*

199.A: **wyd**  
B: *you trynna do something if ur still in Toronto?*  
A *Yeah wyd tonight* (I, asking for information)

### 8.1.3.4 INDETERMINATE

200.A: *How are you?*

B: *Good I'm in a relationship now*

A: *Cool from online?* (F, asking for information)

*Didn't take long lol*

*Humor me*

*He a bad boy?*

B: *It weird you want to know so I'm going to block you*

## 8.2 APPENDIX 2

The table lists the references to the sources from which the corpus was compiled with their digital link and the date of access.

For numbers	Source
1	A post on Instagram account “memezar”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed November 30, 2020. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CIL5OO5LzDu/?igshid=rmfj0d6g70ac">https://www.instagram.com/p/CIL5OO5LzDu/?igshid=rmfj0d6g70ac</a>
2	A post on Instagram account “textsfromyourex”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed November 30, 2020. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/B3GCVtyHrEq/">https://www.instagram.com/p/B3GCVtyHrEq/</a>
3	A post on Instagram account “sarcasm_only”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 2, 2020. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CKKmtXSBXFA">https://www.instagram.com/p/CKKmtXSBXFA</a>
4	A post on the page buzzfeed.com. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 2, 2021. <a href="https://www.buzzfeed.com/ryanschocket2/funniest-messages-of-april-so-far">https://www.buzzfeed.com/ryanschocket2/funniest-messages-of-april-so-far</a>
5	A post on Instagram account “excusemyfeels”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 2, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CKhrQMRIZh0/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CKhrQMRIZh0/</a>
6	A post on Instagram account “vitaminanime”. Screenshot of direct messaging on Instagram. Accessed February 28, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/B6PG-piAkxv/">https://www.instagram.com/p/B6PG-piAkxv/</a>
7	A post on Instagram account “glitzngigglez”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed February 28, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CEVgJbZl_c5/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CEVgJbZl_c5/</a>
8	A post on Instagram account “memezar”. Screenshot of conversation on Messenger. Accessed November 30, 2020. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CLj18jRh01/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CLj18jRh01/</a>
9	A post on the page vice.com. Screenshot of private messaging on Instagram. Accessed March 2, 2021. <a href="https://www.vice.com/en/article/ev38b4/how-to-date-on-dm">https://www.vice.com/en/article/ev38b4/how-to-date-on-dm</a>
10	A post on Instagram account “excusemyfeels”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 2, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CKhrQMRIZh0/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CKhrQMRIZh0/</a>

11	A post on Instagram account “dank.shrimp”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed February 28, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/BrhMLJphHWv/">https://www.instagram.com/p/BrhMLJphHWv/</a>
12	A post on Instagram account “dank.shrimp”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed February 28, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/BolwAZRhBup/">https://www.instagram.com/p/BolwAZRhBup/</a>
13	A post on Facebook wall. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CMVofrOjE4p/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CMVofrOjE4p/</a>
14	A tweet from @Lewis Capaldi. Accessed February 20, 2021. <a href="https://twitter.com/LewisCapaldi/status/1332253713549975553">https://twitter.com/LewisCapaldi/status/1332253713549975553</a>
15	A tweet from @getawaywalls. Screenshot of a tweet thread. Accessed February 20, 2021. <a href="https://twitter.com/getawaywalls/status/1351951967455764489/photo/1">https://twitter.com/getawaywalls/status/1351951967455764489/photo/1</a>
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17	A post on Instagram account “timetounmatch”. Screenshot of direct messaging on Instagram. Accessed February 20, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Br1MJAhAGIG/">https://www.instagram.com/p/Br1MJAhAGIG/</a>
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19	A post on Instagram account “evamarks”. Screenshot of direct messaging on Instagram. Accessed November 21, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CL7Iq-oLkQY/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CL7Iq-oLkQY/</a>
20	A post on Instagram account “covid19texts”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/B-RDZaAAkNv/">https://www.instagram.com/p/B-RDZaAAkNv/</a>
21	A post on Instagram account “covid19texts”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/B-RDZaAAkNv/">https://www.instagram.com/p/B-RDZaAAkNv/</a>
22	A post on Instagram account “covid19texts”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/B-RDZaAAkNv/">https://www.instagram.com/p/B-RDZaAAkNv/</a>
23	A post on Instagram account “voxquote”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CEnUWzVAZi5/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CEnUWzVAZi5/</a>
24	A post on the page buzzfeed.com. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed November 22, 2020. <a href="https://www.buzzfeed.com/ryanschocket2/hilarious-tweets-from-this-weekend-dec2020">https://www.buzzfeed.com/ryanschocket2/hilarious-tweets-from-this-weekend-dec2020</a>
25	A tweet from @sweatyhair. Screenshot of private messaging on Instagram. Accessed November 22, 2020. <a href="https://twitter.com/sweatyhair/status/1231761091308376064">https://twitter.com/sweatyhair/status/1231761091308376064</a>
26	A tweet from @Ayodelefx. Accessed on March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CMLUImRAJrb/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CMLUImRAJrb/</a>



27	A post on Instagram account “voxquote”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CH-xop6AILY/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CH-xop6AILY/</a>
28	A post on Instagram account “voxquote”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CJL6iy1gBOa/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CJL6iy1gBOa/</a>
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31	A post on Instagram account “textsfromyourex”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed November 30, 2020. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/BMkJx5pB-W3/">https://www.instagram.com/p/BMkJx5pB-W3/</a>
32	A post on Instagram account “tomxhevitt”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CJJacIog-sX/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CJJacIog-sX/</a>
33	A post on Instagram account “tomxhevitt”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CJJacIog-sX/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CJJacIog-sX/</a>
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35	A post on Instagram account “memepgirl61”. Screenshot of a conversation from Messenger app. Accessed November 20, 2020. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CKF2fVhgR6Y/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CKF2fVhgR6Y/</a>
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43	A post on Instagram account “art101vandalay”. Screenshot of a conversation from Messenger. Accessed January 5, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CMekeUCI5V9/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CMekeUCI5V9/</a>
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46	A screenshot of direct messaging on Instagram. Accessed July 7, 2020. See Appendix 3 (45)
47	A post on Instagram account “the_official_pompom”. Screenshot of a conversation from Messenger app. Accessed November 20, 2020. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/BrJ3XovDRgN/">https://www.instagram.com/p/BrJ3XovDRgN/</a>
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57	A post on Instagram account “memezar”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed November 30, 2020. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CIL5OO5LzDu/?igshid=hguer57d">https://www.instagram.com/p/CIL5OO5LzDu/?igshid=hguer57d</a>

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62	A post on Instagram account “breefeelings”. Screenshot of a tweet from @breefeelings. Accessed November 30, 2020. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CMVaJXpjBqL/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CMVaJXpjBqL/</a>
63	A post on a website buzzfeed.com. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 2, 2021. <a href="https://www.buzzfeed.com/daves4/texts-that-are-funny">https://www.buzzfeed.com/daves4/texts-that-are-funny</a>
64	A post on Instagram account “freakywhor.e”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 2, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CMXUoT7j-2h/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CMXUoT7j-2h/</a>
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66	A post on Instagram account “totalfrappemove”. Screenshot of direct messaging on Instagram. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CKOzeJWD3FQ/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CKOzeJWD3FQ/</a>
67	A post on Instagram account “textfromyourtext”. Screenshot of direct messaging on Instagram. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/B0bxen1nX1c/">https://www.instagram.com/p/B0bxen1nX1c/</a>
68	Tweet from @glamdemon2004. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://twitter.com/glamdemon2004/status/1296669975055339520">https://twitter.com/glamdemon2004/status/1296669975055339520</a>
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70	A post on Instagram account “meitext”. Screenshot of a conversation from Messenger app. Accessed November 30, 2020. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/BIQn_qbhAZd/">https://www.instagram.com/p/BIQn_qbhAZd/</a>
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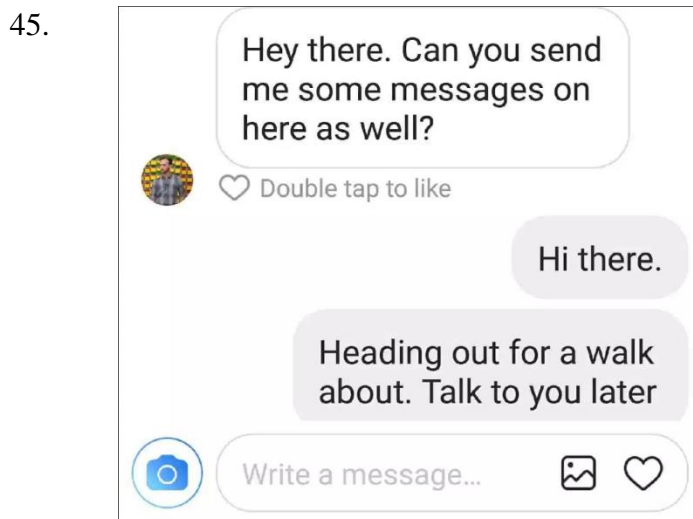
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177	A post on Instagram “voxquote”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed January 23, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CFdRVw0AM6e/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CFdRVw0AM6e/</a>
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181	A post on Instagram account “textsfromyourtext”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed December 10, 2020. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/B_vkDZLnT4B/">https://www.instagram.com/p/B_vkDZLnT4B/</a>
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188	A post on Instagram account “thxbutnothxbabe”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CBtbH05DAKI/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CBtbH05DAKI/</a>
189	A post on Instagram account “sarcasm_only”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CKKmtXSBXFA/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CKKmtXSBXFA/</a>
190	A post on Instagram account “binance”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed January 10, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CKy6qWLAfgo/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CKy6qWLAfgo/</a>
191	A post on Instagram account “excusemyfeels”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed January 10, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CLLDPYmFY9P/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CLLDPYmFY9P/</a>
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193	A post on Instagram account “firstdateguide”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/BYPOW_bj3v1/">https://www.instagram.com/p/BYPOW_bj3v1/</a>
194	A post on Instagram account “textsfromyourex”. Screenshot of a conversation from Messenger app. Accessed November 20, 2020. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/BoSUH1LHWax/">https://www.instagram.com/p/BoSUH1LHWax/</a>

195	A post on Instagram account “crushhapp”. Screenshot of conversation on Messenger. Accessed February 28, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/BnUU0JiB5Yq/">https://www.instagram.com/p/BnUU0JiB5Yq/</a>
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197	A post on Instagram account “textsfromyourex”. Screenshot of a conversation from Messenger app. Accessed November 20, 2020. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/B3-DebknBye/">https://www.instagram.com/p/B3-DebknBye/</a>
198	A post on Instagram account “itssskendallspammm”. Screenshot of a conversation on Messenger. Accessed March 1, 2021. <a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CMdrWz5AP9U/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CMdrWz5AP9U/</a>
199	A screenshot of private messaging on Instagram. Accessed July 7, 2020. See Appendix 3 (199)
200	A screenshot of private messaging on Instagram. Accessed July 7, 2020. See Appendix 3 (200)

### 8.3 APPENDIX 3

The references that do not have an active digital link or whose origin is unknown are listed below according to the corpus numbering in a screenshot format.



157.



199.

200.

